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God in Man

and in Nature.

FIVE LECTURES

BY

P. M. KAILASAM PILLAY B. A.

Madras
THE BRAHMA ORPHAN ASYLUM PRESS.
1910.

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Presented by S. Murugappa
23-10-52.

God in Man and in Nature.

விவேகானந்த புத்தகசாலை
ஹிந்து மதாபிமான சங்கம்
காரைக்குடி.

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BY

P. M. KAILASAM PILLAY B. A.,

PLEADER, MUNICIPAL CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY,
BRAHMA SAMAJ, TINNEVELLY.

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IN

Loving memory of N. Subramaniya Pillai,

MATERNAL UNCLE OF MY LATE BELOVED WIFE,

Thayammai Ammal

AND THE INSPIRER OF

The Liberal Religious Thought

I HOLD SO SACRED,

THIS SMALL VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO MY

Brahma Brethren.

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PREFACE.

This tiny volume comprises the papers read by me at some of the anniversary meetings of the Tinnevelly Young Men's Association, of which I have happened to be President for about a decade. As these papers were not written with any idea of publication, they were lying on my shelf undisturbed and uncared for till the keen eyes of my esteemed friend Mr. V. P. Raj B.A., of Madras who was out here on a mission tour and who sojourned with me then, lighted upon one of them. Curiosity tempted him to find out the other papers and go through them with his characteristic patience. Finding that they contained unsectarian and purely theistic ideas and dealt with some of the problems of life from a purely theistic point of view, he opined that their publication would be of interest to truth-seekers in religion and desired me to send them to the press. I could not but meet his wishes, and this explains their appearance in print.

As to the subject-matter of the papers, I claim no originality whatever to most of the views put forth in them: they are admittedly those of writers of liberal religious thought, especially those of Dr. Martineau, It may be I have not followed them out nor grasped their principles aright. Whatever my shortcomings, I crave the indulgence of my kind readers for them whilst I entreat them to garner up the precious ideas of the brilliant leaders of religious thought that I have freely indented upon.

My very warm thanks are due to my esteemed friend Mr. V. P. Raj B. A., for having kindly seen these papers through the press and for the introduction he has so kindly garnished the book with.

TINNEVELLY,
22nd Sept., 09.

P. M. KAILASAM PILLAY.

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INTRODUCTION.

The best way of writing an introduction to a book is, I think, to introduce the reader to the author himself—to what he *is* rather than to what he has written; for, as Dr. Martineau truly observes, "his workmanship interests and profits us as an expression of himself and would become dead and indifferent to us, if instead of, being a human creation, it were the product of some mechanical necessity." So no apology is needed for quoting a few paragraphs from an article I contributed to the *Indian Messenger* about the Tinnevelly Brahma Samaj, of which the author is the respected and much valued secretary.

* * * *

I must say something of Brother Kailasam Pillay who is the life and soul of the Tinnevelly Samaj. He is an instance of those men whom we call "self made" men. He commenced his education late in life and after going through many phases of adversity and privation, he finally succeeded in passing the B. A., degree examination of the Madras University in 1878. His educational career has been exceptionally a brilliant one; he passed both the Matriculation and F. A. examinations in the first class, and in the B. A. class he carried away all the prizes:—(1) the Gun Gold medal and books—1st prize in the B. A. junior class; (2) The Miller Gold Medal and the Miller prize—1st prize in the senior B. A. class; (3) the Ross memorial prize for having stood first in Mathematics in the B. A. senior class; (4) Sir William Robinson's prize for scripture knowledge in the B. A. class. He was a great favorite of Dr. Miller. And once he wrote that "he was decidedly the most distinguished student in his class." After his graduating, he was a professor in the C. M. S. College and then a sub-Registrar at

Radhapuram. With a view of rising in Government service, he passed all the Special Tests in higher grade. But being disgusted with the treatment accorded him by his superior officers, he left Government service and joined the Tinnevelly Bar as a 1st grade Pleader having passed the necessery examinations. By his integrity of character and the amiable disposition, he soon rose in the social rank and made himself immensely popular. He is now the Municipal Chairman of the town and has been in that position of honor for the last 10 years, and the fact of his election for a number of years without a break goes to prove his ability and the love and esteem in which he is held by the people of Tinnevelly. He is in touch with many literary societies and other public bodies. In connection with a society, of which he is the president, he has written five lectures for anniversary addresses and these will bear ample testimony to his most thoughtful and critical study of the writings of Dr. Martineau. I saw in his library a complete set of the works of Martineau and often heard him expressing great admiration for the doctor

More than all the brilliance of his intellect is the glory of his heart. He thinks like a man and lives like a child. There is the pecular charm of simplicity, utmost candour, sweet freshness of the heart, which every one who comes into contact with him is sure to feel. Sometime of the day he would play with the children (not his children, for, he has none) and would send through the house a ring of healthy, innocent, joyous laughter. His house and the garden are freely used by his neighbours, so much so that the premises seem to belong to them more than to him. He once observed to me, rather humorously, in cautioning me to take care of my things, that his house was a choultry and he had not the heart to drive the people away though the noise and confussion they occasioned were very great. His servant that was in the house for six years suddenly died of cholera leaving a boy behind.

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He now takes care of him as his own son. The tender smile, the warm embrace, the hearty kiss and the anxious care reveal the depth of affection in his generous soul, and I do not know of any earthly father doing more for his offspring than what Mr. Pillay does for that orphan child. When his elder brother became a convert to Christianity, left him and his people, Mr. Pillay grieved very much but did not withhold his help and support. He gave freely for the marriage of one of his christian nieces and on several other occasions when his christian brother and his children stood in need. Once when they happened to be in his house for over 40 days (they generally pay their visits to him and share his hospitality) so great was his love for them that when the day of separation came, he wept bitterly.

He is also a selfmade Brahma. He was not converted by any Missionary or any book. While he was in the College, he suddenly lost his faith in idolatry and turned his eyes inwards. For sometime it was feared by his ignorant relatives, that he would become a Christian. But there was one enlightened soul among his relations, the uncle of his future wife that found out his real faith and assured his other relations that Mr. Pillay would not become a Christian at all and strengthened this assurance by bestowing the hand of his beloved niece in marriage to Mr. Pillay. This uncle of his wife was also a Brahma in faith though he did not take that name; probably he had never heard of it. Though struck down by paralysis and confined to his bed without any hope of recovery, his faith in God was unshaken and bright and it is said, he was always cheerful, and words of thankfulness were always ready to issue from his lips. Mr. Pillay's ideas of human life and its relation to God were confirmed and strengthened by the practical illustration of this noble life; many of his doubts were dispelled by the marvellous intuition of this mysterious soul. Henceforth Mr. Pillay

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kept his faith always burning and steady. When he came into contact with Brahma literature and life his soul gained daily in strength and piety.

Such is the soul at the head of the Samaj at Tinnevelly and need I say that the Samaj is bound to thrive? All the expenses connected with the Samaj are met from his purse. Every Brahma Missionary that goes to Tinnevelly finds a hospitable home in his house. All the important Samaj publications he buys and distributes among his friends. To help our Calcutta brethren, he subscribes for a number of copies of the Indian Messenger and gives them gratis to his friends and others. He purchased a substantial building and gave it for a Girl School with a sufficent endowment for efficient management. This he did in memory of his beloved wife, who was a source of great help to him in all he did and without whose hearty co-operation he would not have been what he is now. He intends to make another endowment of Rs. 5000 for the Samaj and to erect a Mandir over the spacious school-house placing the buildings in the hands of Brahma management. Mr. Pillay, I am sure, will be the pioneer of Theistic movement in the southern most corner of India.

* * * *

Now to his writings. In these five beautiful essays enriched with argument and illustration, he is pleading earnestly for the recognition of the divine in the physical universe and in the spiritual nature of man; for the acceptance of religion in the sense that it is personal, and direct. He has explained in a simple but powerful language the theists' conception of human life and its relation to the Divine. The large and fundumental ideas of liberal religious thought have found in these pages excellent exposition. The reader, I am sure, will go from the book with a sense of elevated thoughts.

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Just to furnish proper setting for the author's ideas, I should like very much to give the reader a bird's-eye view of the general principles of the liberal religious movement known by the name of the Brahma Samaj.

The brahmas have not got any written creed or any theology bearing the official stamp of recognition. Nor do they, on that account, form a loose body of men, each one having a creed of his own without a common basis of thought. The belief in the principle of the *Fatherhood of God* creates for them a common household of faith and that in the *Brotherhood of Man* gives them a common unity of aspiration; the one is the common theology and the other the common platform for united work. Thus in faith and work they are united.

Brahmaism has always stood for a liberal view in all matters and therefore, often goes by the name of liberalism. It is strictly speaking, a spirit, or tendency to view things in relation to a larger outlook. This spirit has produced, in the sphere of religion, certain general ideas, which by their intrinsic worth for universal application, bid fair to become the common heritage of mankind. They are not the manufactures of a sectarian theological factory, whose manopoly is guarded by the letters patent of a special revelation.

The cultured thought of the world at the present day is purely liberal. Various liberal denominations all over the world are preaching the same principles under different names. A reference to the proceedings of the International council of liberal religious thinkers and workers held in Europe and America will give a fair idea of the growth of this spirit.

The principles of Brahmaism are not many; these are very few but of far reaching importance. I shall give them in a tabular form. In an introduction I must necessarily be brief, and the reader will find only a bare statement of them.

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The Main Principles,

1. God is Truth as apprehended by our Intellect; Love and Beauty as apprehended by our affections; Holiness as apprehended by our Moral sense. As Truth he is the first cause and ground work of the Universe; as Love he is its sustaining life; as Holiness he is the foundation of salvation for the human race; as Beauty he is the ideal of perfection. He is the Creator, Preserver, Saviour and the Uplifter of the universe. He is the one, eternal, infinite Person, the Mother-Father of the Universe.

2. The human being is a soul, a spirit gifted with intelligence, affections and moral sense, inheriting divine nature as the child of God and meant for eternal moral and spiritual growth and blessed fellowship with God in unity and love.

Principles derived from the above.

3. As children of the same Father, all mankind is one grand brotherhood; nay the lower orders of life come in for a share of kinship; even what we call the inanimate is the indissolvable setting for our physical life, so that the whole is really a Uni-verse.

Hence we are against (i) caste and all unnatural and artificial differences on account of birth alone—We plead for tolerance, sympathy, equality and liberty (ii) We discountenance killing of animals for food or sacrifices—We plead for vegetarianism to keep up the harmony of sentient life; and for a more intimate acquaintance with Nature's beauty—"Live and let live. Enjoy and let enjoy."

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4. God as the common Father of all reveals himself impartially unto all men of all countries and at all times according to their respective capacities of receiving him.

Hence revelation is not the monopoly of one sect; not final but continual and progressive. No "doomed" or "chosen of God"

5. God, a spirit and man, a spirit, must meet *spiritually* i.e. the communion is direct, personal and immediate.

[*Hence no mediator; no idolatry.*]

6. God, the ideal, perfect in love and holiness, in endowing man-a dependent spirit—with spiritual nature, has immutably established his title to our heart's allegiance. Worship therefore, becomes. (i) an eternal duty, because it is right that such a being as man should worship such a being as God. (ii) an eternal necessity, because it is incumbent on us that we should seek the perfection of our natures by his grace and inspiration. (iii) an eternal blessedness, because we enjoy the fellowship of the All-Good with the freedom of a child.

Hence worship means not an occasional prayer or any conventional act of devotion. It is an ever abiding consciousness of God manifesting itself in total self-surrender to his holy will and a cheerful participation in providence in all the concerns of daily life.

I suppose I shall be helping the author in his attempt to introduce his readers to the philosophy of Dr. Martineau if I should also quote a few more passages from his writings, just to furnish a few specimens of great thoughts set in a language so indescribably beautiful. To set our eyes on any page is to be at once lifted into the higher and serener atmosphere of the spirit.

God as Truth.

The great power, which is manifesting itself under so many shapes, is the living energy of God. He is the cause and ground work of the universe.

When I *desire* to do something, say, to open the door of my room, the invisible and imponderable wish somehow creates, energy that flows through my body and I see a number of movements. I stand up, walk a few paces, draw the bolt and push open the door. The cause and the creator of these movements, one after the other, is my *will*. The cause of the universe must be thought of as conscious Will, whose *orginal* creative activity never appears without revealing a design, a purpose.

Martineau. "Unless it takes more mental faculty to construe a universe than to cause it, to read the book of nature than to write it, we must more than ever look on its solemn face as the living appeal of thought to thought, the medium through which the eye of the Infinite Reason gazes into ours and wakes it to meet him on the way. The cosmos tracks all have the same terminii; and whoever moves upon them passes from mind to mind; God thinking out eternal thoughts on lines that descend to us from cause to law, from law to fact, from fact to sense and we counting our way back with labouring steps from what we feel to what we see, and from what is to what must be, till we meet him in the eternal fields, where all minds live on the same aliment of the ever true and the ever good."

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God as Righteousness.

God reveals himself in us as our conscience. Unlike animals, whose actions are swayed by *one* impulse at a time, man is swayed by two or more motives or springs of action. Which of these motives is noble and which is base, or in other words, their *worth* is revealed unto us by consience.

The judgments of conscience are *relative i e* depend on the motives presented. Out of motives *a* and *b*, *b* may be noble, but out of *b* and *c*, *b* may be base. Hence the difference in moral judgments.

The judgment becomes *absolute* when it is delivered; and must be implicitly obeyed; there is no middle course.

Martineau. Authority implies a relation between two minds; it is purely a personal attribute, a tie of dependence between the higher and the lower and wherever it is felt there are two minds present with each other in uplooking and uplifting attitude.

Again he says—As well might you persuade me that my own eyes created the day-light or that the sunshine was the gift of public opinion, as that the sense of right was anything but the direct illumination of God, the piercing ray of the great orb of souls. Not more certainly does perception teach us what is external to our senses, than consciousness what lies beyond our personality; and that the authority of Justice, Purity and Truth is no manufacture of my own but is imposed upon me by a Divine source above me, I am no less sure than that the stars are not twinklings of my vision and the thunder is no rumbling in my brain.

God as Love.

In the tenderness of the mother, the anxiety of the father, the affection of the sister or the brother, the sympathy of the friend, we see the incarnation of the Divine love. As the physical world is bound by gravitation, the world of spirits is bound by love. There is no escapement : we *must* love and be loved. The pain in the unsuckled breast shews that God is mindful of the infant temporarily forgotten by its mother and reveals how the human life is bound in the iron grip of Love.

Life is a mystery. Sometimes the things we complain of contribute to our happiness. Pain is a sentinel to warn us of danger ; Sorrow purifies, and draws forth sympathy and even sin, like the darkness of the night reveals the virtues of the spirit shining like stars. What we call misfortunes have their own peculiar ministry in the world. The loss of some of our faculties give added power to the others ; often remove from us many a temptation to sin and always lessen the burden of responsibility, which presses so heavily on those to whom more is given and more is therefore expected. The intensity of sorrow is not the same from day to day. So the loving hand of God, while denying us some happiness removes also some unhappiness. Providence is mysterious ; we know not all. Man is in the making and the world is in the making and things can't be otherwise than what they are.

Love in man is the sure guarantee that these ills shall not be for ever.

Martineau. "The instinctive response to the spectacle of misery has a two-fold expressiveness ; it is in us a protesting vote against the sufferings we see ; and a sign of faith that they are not ultimate but remediable. Its singularity is not to be one of these alone but both, were it a simple repugnance it would drive us from its object, but it is an *aversion which attracts* : it snatches

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us with a bound to the very thing we hate and not with hostile rush, but with softened tread and gentle words and uplifting hand. And what is the secret of this transformation of horror into love? It could never be but for the implicit assurance that for these wounds there is a healing possible, if the nursing care does not delay. Is not this principle so deep and intense in our unfolded nature an evident provision for a world of hopeful sorrow. It is distinctly relative to pain and would be out of place in a scene laid out for happiness alone; yet treats that pain as transcient and on passing into the cloud already sees the opening through."

God as the Ideal.

(i) God is omnipotent. This does not mean that he can do unreasonable things. He cannot make a circular square: he cannot make contraditions true. He can make all that is consistent with his nature i. e. Reason.

(ii) God is eternal and changeless. This does not mean that he is not affected by our virtue or sin. There are changes in the states of his being, but these changes proceed from a nature which remains the same for ever.

(iii) God is our Father. We are both divine and human. There is the universal and the individual in us. The universal reveals that we are made of the eternal substance of God, and were it not for this, we could know nothing of truth, beauty, righteousness and love. Our individuality, on the other hand, reveals the distinctness of our existence and were it not for this there could he no sin, no moral heroism, no sense of estrangement from God and no joy of reconciliation with him. What we call creation is only a vountury and an eternal act of self-differentiation of the Infinite and eternal Ground of this universe. By this we have as a grace, our special self-hood, that *will* which is delegated to us that we may freely make it his.

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Theory of Transmigration.

This is an open question. One may believe in it or not. Some do believe in it, while others do not.

(*a*) *Reasons for it*—(i) Some children show certain peculiar intellectual, moral and spiritual tendencies while others do not, the reason for this difference being, it is alleged, their previous incarnation. (ii) the phenomena of sleep and awakening suggests incarnation.

(*b*) *Reasons against it*—(i) Our bodies like our spirits, have peculiar tendencies and differences but no previous incarnation is ever thought of, the principle of heredity or evolution being considered a sufficient explanation. Why not the same principle of evolution in the case of our intellectual, moral and spiritual differences? The children of civilized races are generally much more intelligent than those of primitive tribes. In India the brahmin children are generally more intelligent than the sudra children. As our physical life comes unto us through the setting of the physical frame, so we i.e. our *wills* come into the world in the setting of the intellect etc. We cannot think of one as apart from the other in either case. The principle of heredity is, therefore, sufficent in both the cases. (ii) The insistence on a previous incarnation for every new life that comes into the universe puts a limitation on the infinite power of creation. There is no limit to God's substance and love and hence a continual increase of population. (iii) This theory is connected with another theory of *Karma* and the tendency has inevitably been a pessimistic view of life. (iv) Happiness is relative to the state of the spirit hence differences in life mean only negligible factors. (v) The laws of graduation, habituation in our mental organisation enable us to reconcile ourselves easily with many unforeseen ills of life. (vi) The withdrawal of some faculties often means a corresponding removal of responsibilities and screening from many a temptation to sin.

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The Mission of the Brahma Samaj.

Its mission consists in substituting spiritual worship for the prevailing Idolatry; in emphasising the fact that religion means a direct, personal contact with the father of all spirits and not formal conventional acts of devotion. It insists on prayer as the only means of realising divine nearness and dearness.

Prayer is *natural*. When we see a man of great intellectual powers, we express our admiration; the same feeling when turned towards the architect and director of the universe becomes *adoration*. Similarly our respect we feel for moral heroism in man, when turned towards the author of holiness becomes our highest *reverance*; our gratitude we cherish for benefits received from our fellowmen when turned towards the All-giver becomes devout *thankfulness*; our apology we tender for wrongs done to a brother turned towards the All-merciful becomes passionate *repentance*; our consolation we get in the companionship of a friend becomes joy in the blessed communion with the author of all.

Prayer is not an art or a mechanical toil. Martineau says—"Mechanical toil terminates in a solid product, graceful art is content with simple expression, but religion is degraded when it is reduced to either character. It is not a labour of utility nor is it a simple gesture of passion. He who prays is at the beginning of aspiration not at the evaporating end of impulse, he is drawn not driven; he is not painting himself upon vacancy but is surrendering himself to a Presence real and everlasting. If he flings out his arms, it is not in blind paroxyism but that he may embrace and he embraced; if he cries aloud it is that he may be heard; if he makes melody of the silent heart, it is no soliloquy flung into emptiness but the low breathing love of spirit to spirit."

Praying, in the sense of holding communion, means opening ourselves unto the inflow of divine energy, heavenly peace, and unspekable joy. It is realising our oneness with the Infinite life, Power and Joy.

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Idolatry.

This degrading institution is a standing disgrace to the memory of our ancient rishis, munis, sages and saints. There are those who praise the ancient spirituality of India and with the same breath try to defend the modern Idolatry, which appeals to the sensuous rather than to the spiritual in man. The arguments generally brought forward for its defence are the following :—

1st Man cannot understand abstract ideas without any relation to material things and hence some material symbols are necessary to represent the abstract conception of God.

The use of symbols consists in the power to represent the ideas they stand for. We teach our children abstract notions of number by the aid of beads etc. The beads actually represent the notions and are therefore useful and efficient. What symbols can represent Love, Holiness, Goodness, the attributes of God? Even granting that certain symbols are necessary for grasping abstract ideas, are not better symbols provided by God for the apprehension of his highest attributes? The love of the living father, mother or friend, the constancy of a martyr, the sacrifice of a philanthropist are natural symbols that *can* and *do represent* divine attributes and we have to learn from them. If so, why insist on dull and lifeless symbols in the figures made of wood, stone or metal? When I say I know a man, it is understood that I know his *character*, his inner spiritual life. That is the real knowledge of him. By looking at his picture, I can know nothing of him, except that he is a biped, a specimen of human body. Real knowledge is always spiritual.

2nd. It is said that man gets his conception of God spiritually, but keeps a figure to stand as a symbol for the conception, as an aid in religious exercises, to tow his thoughts towards God etc.

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A beautiful picture, say of Ravivarma or of any great master will appeal to us strongly on the first sight of it. We are then thrilled, but by looking at it often, the novelty wears out and we become, after a few days, absolutely insensible to it, and may ever become unconscious of its presence. The sameness dulls the edge of perception and the thing gradually lapses into unconsciousness. Not so the natural symbols. The world with its sun, moon, stars, trees, flowers, rivers, mountains and seas is breaking out every instant in myriad forms of beauty. The seasons roll one after another in endless succession. We ourselves are always changing—growing in thought, love and wisdom. Our wives and children one also changing. Every thing is not the same for one instant, and hence everything is fresh and new. God then evidently wants us to keep these symbols that never fail to appeal unto us at all moments with ever-changing freshness and beauty. The universe is ever fresh, because it is the recepticle of his progressive designs, and ever fair because it is the expression of his constant love.

3rd. Some again say that though they keep a figure before them, yet they worship the Infinite God as the language of their prayer distinctly denotes. The figure is not worshipped as God, but God is worshiped through the medium of the symbol.

If a man can understand God and know how to address him aright, where is the necessity for any so called medium? When a figure is kept before the eye to represent God and when he bends his head in lowly reverence before it, the sacredness of God is at once transferred to the idol, though he may deny the fact in so many words. The affections are misplaced and it is no wonder that the good people of Tiruchundur carried a broken idol as the dead god on a bier, buried it with funeral cermonies and observed *Suthakam* before another idol was duly installed with an expenditure of about 2 lakhs of rupees. There is an endowment for

doctoring the idol at Courtallam with decocation every day; perhaps it is a malarious place. The idol at Srirangum, it is said, is carried to the barbers' street at regular intervals for a shave. I was told that there was a latrine provided for the idol at Alwartiru-Nagari.

I cannot conceive to what deeper depths of disgrace can religion be dragged. Many evil and immoral practices have fortunatly been prohibited by the Government.

We talk of ancient glory but what about the present degradation? Have we only eyes to see images but no hearts for feeling God. Is the modern Hindu only an animal endowed with senses and not a being gifted with spiritual nature? Is this the result of high vedantic teaching? Are the Upanishads meant only for pedantic disputes and academic display or are they fit to be used only as missiles to be hurled at the faces of the occidentals that dare point out the materialism of the presant-day worship? Dr. Martineau most truly observes—"It can never supply anything to faith except a perishable drapery and if we are to have a religion, which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, we must lay up our treasure in the heaven of the spirit, not in the earthly folds however graceful of the sensuous fancy." Again. "It is in no case the rigour, the ceremonialism that makes the saint; regarded by itself its whole tendency is to produce mental imbecility and disgust and unbelief; and wherever it has existed as a system wherever it has been made the instructor's main reliance, these effects and no others have followed; not a gleam of motion, not an impulse of holy desire has evercome from it. Again a ritual system can no more create a soul than the study of Greek metres can make a poet.

What a waste of money on empty shows and pageants! Half the money that is spent in the temples in India, if utilised for industrial and other developments, India would be immensely enriched and poverty minimised to a great extent.

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Only the Brahmins are now benifited at the cost of other castes that have made over large sums of money to the temples. Nottukotti Chetties are spending every year a large amount on these temples. The poor *brahmin* children get the encourgemant for education etc from the temple grants out of endowments made by sudras. And the sudra children of poor parents are left to beg in the streets. In India, the temples are meant for Brahmins both rich and poor. This blind and misguided endowmet is a social injustice, a sin against society. Let our brethren think.

Social Work.

Standing as it does for the principle of light, liberty and love for all mankind, the Brahma Samaj condemns many of the social evils and endeavours to uplift the present society. Woman, no less than a man, is the child of God and requires as much education as a man. She cannot do without the enlightenment, power and grace, which education alove can give; without which her children must indeed be very poor. Child marriage means only an unfawful robbing of the early joy, which God has so graciously bestowed on innocence and youth and a cruel yoking to the harness of the world, when they are yet too tender to bear the burden; unequal marriage between the old and the young means only selling and buying of the human soul; enforced widowhood is the wicked tyranny of the larger bones and stronger sinews; caste means the sinful breaking up of the sacred house-hold of God.

Brahma Samaj fights aginst these evils and calls upon others to do the same. It is all up-hill work, but it is *our* work. We may all unite hearts and hands, says Chauning, in doing good; in toiling and suffering for the cause of humanity; in spreading intelligence, freedom and virtue; in resisting the abuses and corruptions of past ages; in exploring and drying up the sources of poverty; in rescuing the fallen from in-

temperance; in succouring the orphan and widow; in enlightening and elevating the depressed portions of the community; in breaking the yoke of the oppressed and enslaved; in redeeming the world from sin and woe. The angels and pure spirits who visit our earth come not to join sect, but to do good to all. May this universal charity descend on us and possess our hearts; may our narrowness, exclusiveness and bigotry melt away under this mild celestial fire!"

Prayer.

O Thou Eternal, in whose appointment our life standeth, Thou hast committed to us our work and we would commit to thee our cares. May we wait upon Thy seasons, and leave ourselves to Thee. May we feel that we are not our own, and that Thou wilt heed our wants whilst we are intent upon Thy will. May we never walk anxiously, as if our path were hid, but with a mind fixed simply upon the charge entrusted to us and desiring nothing but the dispositions of Thy providence. More and more fill us with a pity for others' trouble which shall bring forgetfulness of our own, with the charity of them that know their own unworthiness, with the promptitude of them that dare not boast of tomorrow and with the glad hope of the children of Eternity. Lead us in the straight path of simplicity and sanctity and let neither the flatteries nor the censures of men draw us aside from it. And unto Thee, the Beginning and End, Lord of the living and Refuge of the dying, be thanks and praise for ever.

(Martneau's sightly altered.)

COCANADA.
18th January, 1910.

V. P. Raj.

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Conscience.

CONSCIENCE is the faculty which God has given us to know what is right and what is wrong. He commands us to do what is right and to avoid what is wrong. In order that we may not grope about in darkness, he enables us to distinguish the one from the other and instructs us to do the former and to avoid the latter. We are given the necessary knowledge but are left free to choose between the two. There is law prevailing everywhere, in the physical nature as well as in human nature. But the law in the physical universe is observed mechanically. There is no option given to the physical objects to make any deviation from their appointed path. They are subject to immutable and uniform laws. But in humanity, certain laws are given for our guidance; but we are not forced to observe them. We are left free and we may or may not observe them. We are persuaded but not coerced to observe these laws. It is often asked why is this option given to us? why are we not so made as to observe these laws without deviation from the right course. It is not difficult to God to constitute us in such a way. Animals are impelled by their instincts to do certain things unerringly. "The solmon punctually ascends the stream and entrusts its progeny to the fresh waters in which itself was born; the bird builds and hides its nest on the ground or under the eaves or pendent from the bough and is ever ready for its dangers and its time; the mother ostriches club together to put all their eggs of yesterday into one nest in charge of a male bird, and all those of tomorrow into another; the new-fledged fly-catcher at once snaps without missing at its prey,

with true measure of the distance and selection of the kind." In the same way the several kinds of animals do what they are designed to do with precision and with promptitude and without failure. God, who has made the animals perform their functions in such a manner, could easily have constituted us in such a way as to be impelled to do certain things and to avoid other things. But then we would only be like the physical objects moving like machines or like the animals moving by instincts. We could not then be the responsible beings we now are. We would then no doubt, be unable to commit what we now call sin, but we would not also be privileged to do what we now call good. We would not be privileged to be the sons of God and to become angels and saints. We would lose all our dignity, privilege and greatness as the sons of God. By being invested with freedom and selective power, we are made "partners with God, not in servitude as tools or creatures wielded by another hand but taken into counsel with the adoption of sons. We are thereby introduced into relations of trust, of living affection, of possible sympathy, of possible alienation; the Divine proposer of the choice makes no secret of his own preference but in order that, on becoming ours as well, it may constitute a true spiritual tie uniting us with Him, He refrains from imposing it as inevitable and would have us make it our own by unconstrained assent." This selective power, this freedom is therefore given to us in order that a spiritual tie may be formed between ourselves and God, in order that we may be His sons co-operating with Him as partners.

The question now turns up whether conscience is really an unerring guide, whether its dictates are always right and whether it never misleads us. It not unfrequently happens that we ourselves find that what we considered to be right at one time appears to be wrong at a later stage or at another time. What is consecreted as right in one age is condemned as wrong

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in another age. What one nation thinks as right another nation thinks as wrong. Why, if conscience be an unerring guide, these discrepancies in ethical judgments ? Slavery was sanctioned in one age and condemned as wrong in another age. The weaklings i.e. weak men and women were removed from the common wealth at one age when their existence was not productive of good to it ; but now it is considered a crime to take away human life, though it may be of no use whatsoever. Discrepancies like these are very often observed. To find a solution for questions like these, let us go to the nature of conscience and its judgments.

Whenever *we pass a moral judgment*, it is always *upon a person* and not upon a thing. Either of these may affect us agreeably or disagreeably, may be received with welcome or rejected with dislike; but the admiration or aversion awakened by mere things such as a tree etc., are quite distinct from moral approval and disapproval. A branch of a tree falls upon us and we are hurt and annoyed. However great the annoyance, we don't pass any moral judgement on the tree. We don't say that the tree did any wrong act. Even in human acts, we do not judge the thing done but the agents, the persons that did the things. It is the man, the agent that is mean or noble. It is him that we despise or honour.

Let us now enter the precincts of the agent's personality and scrutinize the precise point on which our moral appreciation rests. Man's action may be resolved into three main elements (1) the impulse whence it starts, (2) the movements which execute it and (3) the effects that follow it. When we rest our attention for a moment on each of these, we will clearly find that it is the first alone i.e. *the impulse whence our action starts which we approve or condemn* and which we take as our expression of character. So long as the spring of action has not changed its decree, our praise

or blame will stand, even though by some arrest of execution, the intention is frustrated at its birth, or by a change of outward conditions the consequences are reversed. A man intends to strike at another and raises his hand, but his hand is caught in his clothes and the other runs away before he gets himself ready again. Though the intention to strike has not been executed you will see that he is as guilty as if he had actually struck or beaten. One man lays down a deep plot to take away the life of another, but is prevented by paralysis or sudden death from carrying it out. You nevertheless, see that he is morally guilty, though his plot was not carried out. One intends to benefit an orphan and asks him to come tomorrow; but before the morrow comes what little he had has been stolen away. You see that his conduct is still praiseworthy, though he is not able to carry out his benevolent intention. Another intends devoting his life to start a poor school but sudden death prevents him from doing so. Nevertheless his conduct is praiseworthy. You will thus see that we judge only a person and this we do only with reference to his spring of action. If the spring of action he chooses is alright, we award praise and if otherwise we award blame, though the intended action may not have been done. Nay, if from a wrong motive, even useful consequences follow, we blame the man and if from a right motive bad consequences follow, we praise the man. For instance, a man poisons another with a view to kill him. But the man has some disease which is cured by the poison and the intended consequence does not follow, but the very opposite follows; even then the man that administered the poison with the view to kill him is blamable. Another gives a medicine with a view to cure a disease; but the medicine does not suit the system and bad consequences follow; even then, the man that administered the medicine with the intention of doing good, deserves praise. It is thus clear that, in moral judgements, actions and consequences

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are immaterial and the springs of action from which the actions proceed are alone taken notice of, in awarding praise or blame.

Now even with respect to the springs of action, suppose that there was only *one spring of action* in us or that only was allowed scope, there would be *no moral judgment*. Suppose we had the fury of resentment alone and we were carried away by it without any opposing spring of action, no one would blame us then. The creatures below us are apparently not far from this condition. They are taken up by instinct after instinct each in its turn as if there was no other. They have therefore no problem; nothing is possible to them except to become the organs of each present affection and let it hand over them to the next. They are impelled by only one instinct at a time and they are therefore neither praised nor blamed for their conduct. To this condition we will be reduced, had God so made us as not to go wrong. We will not then go wrong, but then, we will not also be good. As stated already, we would then either be beasts with instincts or be machines without any sense or feeling.

With us however, it is not only one spring of action that claims our attention at a time. Impulses or springs of action turn up within us one after another and when they do so, two or more come into presence of each other and compete for being issued into action. When such competition is made, they report to us their relative worth and we intuitively know the better from the worse. The consciousness we have of the *relative excellence* of the several springs of action which compete for our will is called *conscience*. The moral faculty does not say that anything is absolutely good or absolutely evil but it only *recognises a scale of relative values* as between the several springs of action. A hungry child is about to satisfy his appetite without any restraining thought. But at this time, a poor man turns

up and his need is greater. To satisfy one's appetite is not wrong in itself, but on the other hand is necessary. But when one in greater need turns up, it becomes wrong to taste the food without giving it to him or sharing it with him. A women is taking her rest, and her child cries for milk. Her love of rest impels her to stick to her bed ; but affection for the child draws her to her child. Conscience says that of the two springs of action-love of personal ease and affection for the child-the latter is more worthy. She would therefore be wrong if she did not attend to the needs of the child. When about to take her child to her arms to give milk, a stranger falls from a height and is crying for her help. Affection for her child draws her to her child to give milk and compassion for the stranger draws her to give the necessary help. Conscience says that compassion is more worthy than affection and that she would be wrong if she did not attend to the immediate needs of the stranger. To take rest is in itself not wrong. On the other hand it is necessary and ought to be done in preference to idle talk and a lot of other things. But when compared with attending to the needs of her child, taking rest becomes wrong. Attending to the child, which was right as compared with rest, becomes wrong when compared with the impulse for assisting the stranger in trouble. You will thus see that the dictates of conscience are always relative only and not absolute. When therefore conscience says that A is right as compared with B, it only means that A is better than B; and it may become worse when compared with C. Conscience will then say that A is wrong. Conscience, no doubt, appears to put forth an absolute look, this is due to the nature of the obligation conveyed thereby which is absolute; but it is clear that its judgment is only a comparative judgment and not an absolute judgment. Conscience is not an infallible oracle that gives you any absolute ethical judgment. Its dictates are always comparative; and the ethical discrepancies occur on account of this comparative nature of its judgments.

This also accounts for the gradual *growth of conscience*. All the springs of action are not equally present for comparison amongst all people and amongst all nations and at all times. Culture, education and experience are necessary for the rise of these springs of action. Amongst barbarous nations, the idea of sacredness of life and the idea of public good do not have any play. The savage is solely centered in himself and the moral rule that you should love your enemy does not convey any meaning. The ideas of chastity and of veracity may be foreign to those whose mental condition is very little above that of a savage. As men advance, the several springs of action turn up in the order of their excellence; and it is only the most cultured that have all the springs of action awakened in them.

Dr. Martineau classifies these several springs of action as follows:—

(1) Secondary passions—Censoriousness, Vindictiveness, Suspiciousness.

(2) Secondary organic propensions—Love of ease and sensual pleasure.

(3) Primary organic propensions—Appetites.

(4) Primary animal propensions—Spontaneous activity.

(5) Love of gain.

(6) Secondary affections.

(7) Primary passions—Antipathy, fear and resentment.

(8) Causal energy—Love of power, ambition, liberty.

(9) Secondary sentiments—Love of culture.

(10) Primary sentiments of wonder and admiration.

(11) Primary affections—parental and social.

(12) Primary affection of compassion.

(13) Primary sentiment of reverence.

You will thus see that Dr. Martineau classifies our springs of action into 13 heads. These are classed in the order of their merit from the lowest to the highest, secondary passion occupying the lowest place and reverence the highest place. Secondary passions are always wrong. It is never right to be censorious, vindictive and suspicious. All the other springs of action are right if not competed for by a superior spring of action. There is nothing wrong in loving ease, in satisfying our appetites, in playing, in earning money, in being sympathetic, in being angry, in loving power, in loving culture, in admiring, in loving children and neighbours and in pitying. When any one of these competes with a higher spring, the lower becomes wrong. As said before, a mother's love of ease and confining herself to her bed (*2nd spring*) when her child cries for milk (*11th spring*) is wrong. A mother attending to her child (*11th spring*) in preference to attending to the needs of a stranger that has fallen from a height (*12th spring*) is wrong. When one action is condemned as wrong at one time and when the same action is praised as right at another time, the springs of action that are compared on the various occasions are different and hence the discrepancies in ethical judgments. In Greece, the weakly and the infirm were sacrificed by the exposure of infants and the cutting off of the old. Nothing is more revolting to us than this. But the springs of action which competed with the Greeks were different from those that now compete with us. The State was to them the Divine perfection of the Cosmos. What they compared was-whether public good was more worthy or the preservation of a useless life. The answer would only be that public good was more worthy. The idea now opened to our view is that a life is a sacred trust given by God and that no weak condition or other circumstance can ever cancel it. The question now is whether reverence for God i. e. whether

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reverence for the trust given by God or whether temporal good should have preference. The answer is clear. We have no right to take away human life. Slavery was sanctioned only in this view that human beings were considered as so many bodies able to turn out so much work and it was not considered wrong to treat them as property. Now that a human being is considered as a child of God with a trust to improve himself, it is considered wrong to hold a man as one's property. It this way every discrepancy in ethical judgment can be explained.

It therefore appears, that while conscience is not an infallible guide teaching absolute morality holding good at all times and applicable to all ages, it is an infallible guide as regards the particular question that is submitted to it for its judgment. As God requires and can require every man only to do his best and in practical life we are required to act only with reference to circumstances in which we are placed and as our environments and the other circumstances are intended and calculated to train us, it is clear that on each particular occasion and at each period of life our duty is to act up to the light we have, to the dictates of our conscience at the particular moment or period. It may be that as we advance, higher views of life and higher springs of action may rise. But *our duty at a given time is to do the best shown to us then.* To do so will prepare us for higher lights. One duty done makes it easier for us to do another. Duty faithfully performed in a lower sphere of life will fit us to perform our duty in a higher sphere of life. We are always ascending up in the ladder of progress. We must place our feet firm in each lower step so as to be able to rise to a higher one. No one can be a saint all at once with his moral code complete. God sends light to us according to our capacities and we must be true to that light; and we will *then* be able to receive brighter lights. God will not punish us for not doing

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what is not revealed to us. One who does not know what human life is will not be punished for taking it away with the intention of promoting public good. He does his best and God will say well done. Even now it is a question whether capital punishment is necessary and justifiable. It may be that at some future time, capital punishment may be considered wrong. Nevertheless the judge who now inflicts capital punishment cannot be considered to be doing a wrong act. He does what he considers right and no man can do more; and God does not require any one to do more. Each man is shown by his conscience what his duty is in the particular circumstances of his case and not with reference to what he may be and what the world will be at a future time. He is bound to be faithful to the best ideal that is revealed to him. A father instructs one son not to beat others but to remain quiet, another to give alms to the poor that come to his house and a third to go about doing good, relieving the wants of the poor, healing the sick and doing a lot of other useful things. These instructions he gives according to their different capacities and if each will do what he is instructed to do, he will gain his father's approbation and his character will be so much improved and be made better. God acts precisely in the same way. He is instructing each according to his present circumstances and if found faithful to these instructions a higher duty will be given him to do and he will be moving onward in the path of progress. Conscience is therefore an infalliable guide for each and every one is bound to act up to its dictates.

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Life's High School and College.

THIS world is so full of troubles, trials, temptations, sufferings and miseries that the question is very often raised and that seriously by eminent men, whether this life is worth living. Others there are who view this world as a snare and think that the best way for a man to do will be to fly away from it, to retire to forests and there to live a secluded life far from the haunts of men, immersed in the contemplation of God, making the moss his bed, the cave his humble cell, the fruits his food and the crystal well his drink. There are others who take a hopeful view and hold that life is worth living and that the physical and moral evils in this world have their proper explanation and that they are not inconsistent with the rule of this world by a benevolent and all powerful God. Whichever side we may take, it cannot be denied that physical and moral evils exist in this world to an enormous extent and stagger many a thinking and sympathetic mind. Unless supported by faith and full confidence in the righteous rule of this world by an all-wise Governor and in the ultimate triumph of virtue, they are likely to give up the case as hopeless of any satisfactory solution. There are a thousand ills and more which flesh is heir to. To begin with, there are the pains of want, such as hunger, thirst and fatigue. There are then the sufferings which set in, when the animal organism can no longer be worked properly. The failing organs are susceptible of many forms of painful decay. Some animals pine away into skeletons and strew the ground with their dead. Others are smitten with maladies, which spread rapidly, and in order to arrest the spread, they have to be slain. We find many of our brethren

fall victims to such terrible diseases as gout, rheumatism, paralysis, apoplexy, diabetes and consumption etc; and many in the last scene, which ends their strange eventful history, have to drag on their miserable existence in second childhood sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything. Apart from the diseases and sufferings incidental to old age, weakness and failing organs, we are very often invaded by epedemic and endemic maladies, which carry away in their sweep, thousands, irrespective of their age and bodily vigour and strength and leave many a family altogether desolate and crippled for ever in their resources of life. There are then the disasters resulting from physical elements. Storms rend the forest, floods drown the plains, the untimely frosts nip every growing promise, and the avalanche buries the growing fields and the warm life of the valley in its snows. The earthquake, the volcanoe and the geyser make a cruel sport of life and the disasters produced by these agents have indeed a very appalling effect. In the words of John Stewart Mill, "nature impales men breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations and has hundreds of other hideous death in reserve. All this, nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and justice emptying her shafts upon the best and noblest indifferently with the meanest and worst, upon those who are engaged in the highest and worthiest enterprise and often as the direct consequence of their noblest acts. She mows down those on whose existence, hangs the well being of a whole people, perhaps the prospects of the human race for generations to come. A single hurricane destroys the hopes of a season, a flight of locusts or an innundation desolates a district, a trifling chemical change in an edible root starves a

million of people. The waves of the sea like banditti, seize and appropriate the wealth of the rich and the little. We have to add to these, the sufferings resulting from the relation of animals to their hostile tribes. We find that the law of prey amongst carnivorous tribes makes each race of creature through vast provinces of natural history devourer of some other and it is not possible to imagine without dismay the terror of the hunted victim, the agony of the capture and the atrocity of the death". It is unnecessary to dwell further on these physical evils. Only one thing has to be added. In addition to the sufferings which we share with animals, we have ideal miseries which affect us even when there is no actual physical pain and these affect us for very long periods. Memory has the cruel property of stripping trouble of its transitoriness and foresight betrays the secret and makes us suffer long before the instant of surprise. The evils we have to meet do not stop here. We have also to experience the moral evils that prevail to a very large extent in this world. The miseries which vice and wrong doing produce are great indeed, and leaving out of consideration such of them as follow as natural penalties for sin, we have a vast residue which affect the innocent not concerned in the guilt or wrong-doing which produces these consequences. Apart from these miseries, the very fact that there is so much unholiness in human life is in itself a terrible and appalling feature. There is however a positive, bright and sunny side to this picture and no one in his senses can deny that the joy and happiness of life and all the other enjoyable and good things preponderate over the physical and moral evils alluded to above. There is however the mixture and in the words of Francis Power Cobbe, we have "an inarticulate mingling of psalms of joy with funeral dirges; the morning song of the bird with the death cry of the hunted brute; the merry hum of the bee in the rose with the shrivelling of the moth in its

fruitless fire; nature's incense rises one hour in balm and perfume to the skies and the next steals along the ground foul with the smell of blood and corruption." Such a mixture of good with evil has led such a renowned thinker as John Stewart Mill to remark that "since the exertion of all His power to make it as little imperfect as possible leaves it no better than it is they cannot but regard that power though vastly beyond human estimate yet as in itself not merely finite but extremely limited". In order to explain the evils in this world some persons resort to this hypothesis suggested by John Stewart Mill that God though benevolent may be weak and ignorant unable to do better than He has done for His creatures, albeit that is bad enough". Terrible and heart-rending as are some of the evils alluded to above and albeit there is so much mixture of evil with good, there is no need to resort to such despairing hypothesis as that suggested by John Stewart Mill or to any other hypothesis that may postulate the absolute rule of physical forces or that may detract from the power and goodness of God. We find God in nature, in humanity and in history and we find Him to be omnipotent, all-wise and all-good. There are no doubt, the facts alluded to above, which are perplexing enough and which seem to be an indication of a limit to the goodness or power of God. But a careful study will show that these can be explained and that they are not inconsistent with God's goodness and power, unless omnipotence means power to cause the co-existence of contradictory things. Notwithstanding all that may be said to the contrary, life must be held to be worth living. It is not possible to make up the grand total of the good and evil things in life and to strike the balance and to say what the resultant would be in order to enable us to give a verdict on the question whether life is worth living. There is however one unfailing test which enables us to give a verdict on this question. That

test is the test of willingness or un-willingness to die. No one is willing to die however maimed and wretched the conditions of life may be. The joy and happiness of life is so great, so much so that no creature, animal or man is willing to quit however bad its or his lot in life may be. The demand for happiness in finite creatures cannot be unlimited. There must be some limit to it. Life is a blessing in itself, and God has made it enjoyable in itself though bad its lot may be; and why not the limit confined to this point? The pains of want which we started with, work the organism. They announce a need and serve as guides and incentives to supply it. They are self corrective and react into the corresponding pleasures. Life itself would be unsupportable and be unable to go on, were it not for this class of pains. Without appetites, passions and affections, the animal and ourselves would be doomed to torpor and no animal or man can be said to live. The pains of decline no doubt present a formidable attitude to the enquiring mind. But it must be borne in mind that finite creatures must necessarily be imperfect in quality, and restricted in their range. God acts by determinate methods and the whole discipline of life consists in His acting so. Moreover, the methods and laws cannot be considered as intended for this world alone. They may negotiate for other interests also and contemplate more enduring good. In the words of Doctor Martineau, " in launching a power commissioned to a million ends, still more in adjusting together twenty different lines of power whose crossing and confluence is to work out these ends, it is surely conceivable that the creator's will, while subjecting His means to steady rule, may realise some elements of His design less absolutely than if they had stood alone. The uneasiness of death is the necessary correlative to the happiness of life and whatever excess of pain there may be in connection with death, may be due to the rule by fixed laws which negotiate for other interests also." If it were

not for the provision of exit of animals and human beings by death in its various forms including the predacious method, we don't know what the result would be upon economy of the globe. There will be no space to live in for new comers and vast changes would have to be made in the prevailing methods and we don't know what the objectors would suggest, in order to make the conditions of life more happy. After all, animals are not imaginative creatures and they don't suffer like ourselves either by a foresight of what may happen in future or by a memory of what has happened in the past and one must be bold indeed who can affirm that such sufferings as animals have, which have reference only to the actual present, are not admissible in the rule of a benevolent God, who has also other interests to serve and who work out His plans by fixed laws. He can no doubt bar out these evils if he should act unpledged and conduct all things by incalculable miracles. But when once he commits Himself to fixed laws, the door is shut on a thousand things which could be done by unpledged acts and miraculous interferences. In the words of Doctor Martineau " every legislative volition narrows the range of events previously opened and substitutes necessity for contingency, and a group or system of laws in providing for the occurrence of one set of phenomena relinquishes the conditions of another. It is therefore vain to appeal to the almightiness of God unless you mean to throw away the relations of any established universe and pass to his unconditioned infinitude. In the cosmos, He has abnegated it and there is a limit for what you may demand from it as within its compass. The limits, it is true, which are assigned to its play are self imposed but in order to any determinate action at all, some limits had to be assigned". Unless we or rather the objectors to the existing scheme can show that, to a different scheme, better possibilities and a less mixed good would have attached themselves,

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a tone of complaint which can only be justified by such comparative criticism is out of place. Seeing that the joy and happiness of life is so great that no one is willing to die however miserable the conditions may be, seeing that such evils as happen in this world are the result of fixed laws by which God works out His plans and seeing that good preponderates over the evil things in animal life, we may rest confident that the maximum of good is produced with the minimum of pain and that such evils as do occur are the necessary correlatives to the good things for which the existing schemes are being worked out. Now passing on to a particular consideration of the evils relating to human life, we find that in addition to the evils he shares with the animals, man has to face moral evils also and that they both receive a vast expansion by his capacity to idealize them. It is not the actual present alone that troubles him but a memory of the past and a fore-sight of the future constitute a large and major portion of his sufferings. Past is past and yet he suffers from his memory thereof; and what evil he may anticipate in future may not happen at all; and yet the thought of what may happen to him unnerves him and makes him a prey to incalculable sufferings. The problem of evil therefore seems to be more perplexing when we come to humanity. But it is not really so. The additional dimensions which evils gain in us, are not due to any lower status or any defective constitution, but to our exalted nature, superior endowments and higher capacity. We are endowed with the superior and inestimable faculties of reason, conscience and love and these are our privilges and it is to these privileges we have that the additional sufferings are due. No sane man would be prepared to lose his intelligence, conscience and love and to consent to become a brute if the option be given to him, in order that his sufferings may be lessened. He would rather have his sufferings multiplied than part with these privileges of his. We should also remember that these ideal sufferings are more than counter-balanced by the

ideal happiness which results as the necessary consequence and counterpart of the very nature and endowments which give room to the ideal sufferings. As for the moral evils, the possibility arises from moral freedom. God has committed a trust to us and this means that we are free to choose the one or the other. This means that, in choosing the right, we should do it of our own accord and be not forced to do it. If forced, the choise is no longer ours. The possibility of moral evil is the necessary condition on which our dignity as moral beings depends; and unless we can consent to loose our privilege as moral beings, we should make no complaint about the existence of the moral evils. God can no doubt bar out moral evils; but this He can do only by substituting mechanism for free agency, and I don't think any one would consent to forfeit his privilege as a free agent and to become a mere machine without the power to do wrong, in order to avoid moral evils. It will be impossible even for omnipotent power to make man free and at the same time, to make him act like a machine. We may therefore rest with hope that all the physical and moral evils in this world have a beneficent and moral purpose and that residue as may remain, for which we may not be able to find satisfactory explanation at present, will meet with its proper solution in due time, as we advance in our intelligence, character and love of humanity. Our purpose in life is not mere enjoyment but to develope ourselves intellectually, morally and spiritually; and the development depends to a considerable extent on the very sufferings against which so much complaint is raised. Our life on earth is only a preparatory stage and this world is a nursery for the soul beautifully adopted. for its growth and developement and for the exercise and culture of its moral and spiritual powers. The evils and sufferings in this world will meet with their proper solution when it is regarded as an educational institution, for the training of our souls. In the words of a learned writer

"The ills we see,
The mysteries of sorrow deep and long,
The dark enigmas of permitted wrong,
Have all one key
This strange sad world is but our Father's school,
All chance and change His love shall grandly over rule
He traineth so
That we may shine for Him in this dark world
And bear His standard, dauntlessly unfurled
That we may show
His praise by lives that mirror back His love
His witnesses on earth, as He is ours above."

Another great writer observes that "the world from our first to our last hour is our school and life has but one great purpose that is education."

In this educational institution there are 4 departments which may be called the elementary school, the secondary school, the High school and the College of life. In all these departments, sufferings play an important part in training the soul. The elementary school of life consists of infants who are guided by their passions and are ruled by them. A student in this school knows no restraint and goes wheresoever his instinctive appetites and passions carry him. He lives for the moment and he thinks that the be-all and the end-all of his life is his present pleasure. His life is little more than that of an animal. Man, however, is destined to live a higher life than that of an animal and the student in the elementary school is not left to go on unchecked. While God has left man free, He has so arranged that the animal life of a human being and wrong doing cannot go on unchecked. Unless some check is provided to the degenerative tendencies when they set in, total moral anarchy may be the result and a hell on

earth may be formed. God has therefore wisely provided adequate checks to these degenerative tendencies and one of the greatest of the checks is the suffering resulting directly and indirectly from the unrestrained play of the passions; and this provision of suffering as a check plays a very special part in the matter of raising the infant soul of the elementary school of life to a higher standard of life. The infant learner in the elementary school soon finds that his wild and unrestrained appetites and passions thrust him upon divergent directions which carry him no where. He feels at variance with himself and finds himself defeating the very object he has in view. Pleasure is his only object in life and in this he finds himself sorely disappointed. Nay, he finds the reverse as the result of his animal freedom in giving way to his appetites and passions. A glutton finds that he has become a dyspeptic. A drunkard finds that his nervous system has become abnormal and prostrated. A debauchee finds that he is a prey to abominable diseases of various kinds; and an angry man finds that he has been led away by his passion into positions from which he finds it difficult to extricate himself. Sufferings of these and other kinds which follow, as the natural and necessary consequence of his wild acts, makes a student of the elementray school pause in his career and he is made to think that in order to attain the ends he has in view, he must revise his life programme. He thenceforth tries to adopt a different rule of life for his guidance. Sufferings, therefore in the elementary school of life have a very salutary effect and impell man to emerge from his animal life. They act like the rod of a school master, who uses it to compel unwilling students, to learn their lessons. The rule of life, which a student who has received his training in the elementary school of life adopts for his guidance in life, is prudence and he is thenceforth taken to the secondary school of life, where the guiding principle of life is

prudence. In this school, the prudent man tries to keep himself under control. The faculties of reason, conscience and love with which God has endowed us and which, He intends we should develope, find their field of exercise and development in work,—which is the law of our being—and in society. The prudent student in the secondary school of life gives exercise only to his intellect. Pleasure is still his object in life and this he tries to secure by keeping his passions and appetites under control, so that he may not be led away by them into inextricable difficulties, troubles and sufferings. In giving indulgence to his passions, he tries to keep himself within the limits beyond which he cannot go with impunity. A man given to anger and resentment dose not give vent to them when provoked by persons in authority over him, but is not slow to appear in his real colour when his inferiors, who can do no harm to him, are concerned and even here, he tries to see that he does not place himself within the clutches of criminal law. An avaricious man tries to accumulate wealth by means fair or foul and does not in the least care whom he wrongs or spoils; but he tries to see that he is not found out. His policy is not that he should do no wrong but that he should put on a respectable appearance and that he should not be found out as a wrong-doing person. His chief and only concern is his self-interest and this gives a unity of movement to all his activities. The waste resulting from a life of mere passion is thus saved. And his activities are reduced to an economical arrangement. In this life of prudence he however, finds as the result of his intellectual developement, that there is no real satisfaction. He finds that in the transitory things of this world, in which he tries to find his pleasure and happiness, the elements are wanting which can give him real happiness. The greater the things of this world he gets, the more his desire for them increases. There is no rest or satisfaction for him. He finds

that the sentiments of the learned sage Thayumanavir, (தாயுமானவர்) expressed in the following lines, are fully endorsed by his experience.

ஆசைக்கோரளவில்லை அகிலமெல்லாம்சட்டி
ஆளினும் கடன்மீதிலே யாணைசெலவினவர்
அளகேசனிகராக அம்பொன்மிக வைத்தபேரும்
நேசித்துரசவாத வித்தைக்கலைந்திவர் நெடுநாளிரு
நிலையாகவேயினும் காயகற்பந்தேடி [ந்தபேரும்
நெஞ்சுபுண்ணாவதெல்லாம்
யோசிக்கும்வேளையில் பசிதீர வுண்பதும்
உறங்குவதுமாக முடியும்.

These lines mean that there is no limit to our desires. An emperor who may rule the whole world, will desire to extend his rule over the seas; one who may be rich enough to be compared to Kubairan (குபேரன்) or the lord of wealth, will wander about to find the means of converting baser metals into gold. One who has lived long enough will desire to live perpetually and with this object will worry himself out, seeing for medicines to make the body indestructible. When considered, all we do resolve themselves only into eating to satisfy hunger and sleeping and nothing more

The student in the secondary school of life thus finds that real worldly pleasure is only a delusion, that the things of this world cannot satisfy a man and that his life consists practically of eating to satisfy hunger and sleeping to give rest to his body and that all his energies prudently and strenuously put forth to secure happiness do not find their real fulfilment. Matters do not stop here. He finds that his prudential calculations do not always succeed and that he is also landed some times in difficulties, troubles and sufferings. There are so many forces at work that he finds that he cannot always manage them to his best advantage, and that he has sometimes to meet with discomfiture,

failure and sufferings. These however do not follow as a necessary consequence of and as penalty for his actions, as in the case of the elementary school; but they happen in spite of his strenuous efforts to avoid them. He is thus made to pause in his career. He finds no real happiness but is driven on restlessly from one thing to another and has also to meet with sufferings and disappointments. While he thus deliberates over his course of life and tries to see what he is really aiming at, he begins to see that there is a higher order of life than the one he was persuing. The dictates of his conscience are heard distinctly and he finds that there are higher incentives to action separated by quite other differences than self-interest. He is thus born to moral life and begins to receive his training in the high school of life where the students learn to make duty their rule of life irrespective of all consequences. Thus the sufferings incidental to life which acted as the rod of a school master in the elementary school of life, play the role of a friend in the secondary school and teach him that there is a higher order of life and place him amidst higher springs of action separated by moral differences. Promoted to this school of duties or the high school of life the student finds that this world is administered by a moral governor and that he expects us to be loyal to his commands as revealed to us by our conscience. He finds that we are invested with selective powers and introduced into relations of trust. God makes no secret of his own preference but He wants that we should make it our own by unconstrained assent. God therefore shows us what our duty is and is perpetually commanding us to be loyal to it. The student in the high school of life makes 'duty' his guide in life and tries to go straight towards it. He tries to keep himself in the path of duty without swerving to the right or to the left. He cares for no consequences but finds his consolation and delight in doing his duty, come what may as the result

thereof. The student in this high school of life finds as remarked by Samuel Smiles that "Duty embraces man's whole existence. It begins in the home, where there is the duty which children owe to their parents on the one hand and the duty which the parents owe to the children on the other. There are in like manner the respective duties of husbands and wives, of masters and servants, while outside the home there are the duties which man and woman owe to each other as friends and neighbours, as employers and employed and as governors and governed." The student in this high school thus finds that life is duty itself. In the performance of his duties he meets with many obstacles, difficulties and sufferings; but he feels that his personal interest should not count as a factor at all and that his nay should be nay and his yea should be yea without recall. In this school, sufferings and troubles brace up the student and make him more courageous in standing by his post of duty. A student in this school who persists in acting up to the dictates of his conscience finds it easier and easier to do so; and when he has to do so amidst difficulties, opposition, troubles and sufferings, he finds his sense of duty and fearlessness of consequences more and more strengthened. A student in this school does not serve another's will. He is his own master and not the slave of his passions. His word is his bond. The famous Harischandra was an advanced student of this school. His word was his bond. Though he had to lose his kingdom, to wander about as an exile with his wife and child not knowing where to get his food or to lay his head, to part with his wife and serve as a slave and to meet with a great many hardships, trials and sufferings, he would not retract his pledged word. The great Washington's motive power was his spirit of duty. He performed his duty at all hazzards and with inflexible integrity. When he was urged to reject a treaty, which he felt he was bound to ratify, he gave his sanction for the treaty though such ratification made him very unpopular and

he ran the risk of being stoned by the mob. In reply to the remonstrance, he said that he could not act otherwise than by obeying the dictates of his conscience. Gentlemen, we will do well to mark his words that he could not act otherwise than by obeying the dictates of his conscience. Wellington's watchword was his duty. And he said on one occasion that "there is little or nothing in this life worth living for but we can all of us go straightforward and do our duty." A host of others who were students of this high school of life can be named. All honour to these noble souls. They have shewn by their lives that it is possible for man to stand by his duty, cost what it may in the shape of loss of health, wealth and other enjoyable things of this world. In the non-essentials of life, in things which we will have to leave behind sooner or later, in things pertaining to this world alone, we do not all have equal advantages. One possesses more, another less and a third still less. But it is possible for every one of us to do his duty. As remarked by Wellington "we can all of us go straight forward and do our duty". God desires that every one of us should get himself trained in this high school of duty; and the character formed in this school will be the only passport to higher privileges. No one can shirk training in this school with impunity. So long as one does not enter this school, his life will not be more than that of an animal. The true dignity of man consists in perfecting his character in this school. It must however be remembered that, however high and laudable duty may be, it is not the finality. Duty is the cold bare anatomy of righteousness. It is cold, prescribed and formal. Though the dictates of conscience be always obeyed and the harmony between the inward voice and the outer action be kept up unbroken, still there is repression so long as conscience is called in to decide between rival springs of action and the harmony secured by laying the silencing hand on all that would speak in discord, if left alone. The nature is no doubt

well regulated. But in every act of duty as mere duty, there is a burden felt and there is a sacrifice of force, which has to be spent in holding down the opposing forces. The student of duty in the high school of life feels that his training in this school is not sufficient, that his life is not a complete life, that there is still a discordance between the scale of intensity and the scale of excellence of his several springs of action. He feels that, unless there is absolute concurrence between the scale of intensity and the scale of excellence, his life will not be complete and be fully developed. He feels that this absolute concurrence can be reached only by love, the all sufficient love, and he thenceforth receives his training in the highest school or College of life where lessons of love are received, where one's instructions receive their finish and finality by being taught to love God as our father and all human beings as His children and our brethren. Love is the talisman which makes duty pleasurable and easy. Duty is the body and love is the soul. Duty is dignified, purified and exalted by love. A hired nurse may watch faithfully at the bed side of a sick child as a duty. But to the mother's loving heart, watchfulness at the bedside of her sick child is never felt as a duty. The word 'duty' has a jarring sound to her. She does not feel that she makes any sacrifice at all, though she has to keep awake and be paying constant and unremitting attention, the whole day and night, for days and months together. Grace Darling risked her life in the awful storm, when she set out in the dark night on a raging sea, to rescue the survivors of the wreck of Forforshire; nothing but love of humanity could have enabled her to do so. Her's was the heroic courage of a heart, full of sympathy and love.

Cradinal Boromeo in the sixteenth century volunteered to go to the plague-infected city of Milan when his clergy advised him to remain where he was, personally visited the sick in their homes, in the hospitals

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and everywhere, watched over them, gave them food and medicine and administered to them the last rights when dying; and he spent all his money in building schools and colleges and in works of charity and mercy. Father Damien chose for his field of labour of love an island of lepers and there spent his life, preaching the gospel and doing good to the people. He caught leprosy and died a leper. When intending to go to this place, he knew that he ran the risk of becoming a leper himself. But this did not deter him. So great was his love of humanity. The noble John Howard was an advanced student in this college of love. He gave himself up entirely to service of humanity. During a period of 12 years from 1772 to 1783, he travelled upwards of forty-two thousand miles in visiting the jails of the chief towns and cities of Europe and spent from his own money upwards of £ 30,000 in relieving the prisoners, the sick, and the friendless. In 1785 he desired to visit Paris again but the French Government had prohibited him from appearing on the soil of France. This however could not deter the resolute philanthropist. He disguised himself and had his object accomplished. He then went to Smyrna where plague was raging. He took the fever and suffered fearfully. He then intended to extend his inquiries on the subject of plague and when travelling for this purpose, he caught fever and died alone amidst strangers in his sixty fourth year. In the words of Burke, "He visited all Europe to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the guage and dimensions of misery, depression and contempt, to remember the forgotten, to attend the neglected and to visit the forsaken; to compare and collect the distresses of all men, in all countries. His plan is original and it is full of genius as it is of humanity. It is a voyage of discovery, a circumnavigation of charity."

In our own time, Doctor Bernardo was an example of the intense energy and self sacrifice which a student in the college of life will be able to put forth in the service of humanity, when his guiding principle is love. A host of other students in this college of life can be named and all these noble souls teach us what we should make of our existence in this world. They all teach us that wealth, health, long life, power and other ordinary aims of life are worthless except in so far as they give us opportunities for the exercise and development of our faculties and that whatever pursuits we may be engaged in, we must be actuated by a sense of duty and love of humanity and that no other consideration should have any influence with us. In this college of life sufferings have a very elevating and ennobling influence. They make the students gentle, compassionate and tender.

There are various systems of faith and worship and men differ widely as regards the doctrines they profess. Differences of opinion as regards religious tenets are natural and no one has a right to blame another for any honest opinion of his own. In this respect, every one should try to have correct beliefs and hold fast that which he believes to be good and true; and he should also have the highest respect for those who, after honest efforts to find out the truth, hold views differing from his own. Man has no right to blame and God will not punish any one for his involuntary acts of judgment. But no one will be justified in being insincere. Mere intellectual assent to a set of doctrines, however correct they may be, will not save a man. Every one is bound to live up to his conviction. He must show by his life that he puts forth his best efforts to live up to his ideals. This he must do even as regards beliefs that may be non-essential; but as regards the essential doctrines of religion in which all persons who believe in the existence of God and his moral relationship to us, are more or less agreed, viz.,

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that God is our father and we are His children, that conscience is the voice of God and we are bound to be loyal to it and that God is love and we will be Godlike only when we live a disinterested life in the service of humanity, there can be no excuse what ever for one not trying to live up to the highest light he may have. Our life's purpose will therefore remain unfulfilled, unless we get ourselves trained in the high school and college of life, that is, in the schools of duty and love. We must set before us as our watch word and ideals the following precepts:—

1. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind."

2. "Love thy neighbour as thyself" Nay "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

3. "Whatsoever you intend that men should do to you, do you ever so to them."

Man grows in his manhood only in so far as he grows in the realisation in his actual life, of the truths, embodied in the precepts mentioned above; and this growth can be secured only by his training in the high school and college of life. We must therefore get ourselves trained in these departments of the world's educational institution and whatever sufferings and troubles we may meet with on the way, we must bear them with patience. They have an inestimable part in the training of our souls. They deter us from being carried away by our passions in the elementary school of life, they inspire us with the idea of the worthlessness of the ordinary aims of our life, in the secondary

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school of life; they brace us up and act like tonic in the high school of life and finally in the college of life when we take love as our guiding principle, they sweeten our temper and make us gentle and patient. God never sends a joy not meant in love, much less a pain. Each soul redeemed from sin and self knows its calvery. In God's hands we are safe. Let us, therefore, undaunted by fear of consequences, resolutely and systematically get ourselves trained in the school of duty and love and may God in whom we live, move and have our being, give us strength and delight in getting ourselves trained in these schools.

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The Contingencies of Life

AND

Their disciplinary value.

A time there was when our ancestors, I mean the ancestors of the present occupants of this earth, looked upon everything with childlike simplicity, with wonder, awe and reverence. To them everything was mysterious and nothing natural. The sun rose to them, as it now does, with all its majestic glory, shone with its noonday splendour and set behind the mountains with its facinating golden rays giving to the sky both in the morning and evening a picturesque, exquisitely beautiful and enchanting appearance. They felt how much all their comfort, their very life depended upon the Sun. In its presence, darkness gave place to light, warmth took the place of cold, the vegetable world grew, corn and fruits ripened and man himself drew in new strength from the life-giving rays. The rigours of winter abated and there was the verdure of spring and the richness of summer. They could do nothing to produce or modify these things and the sun was the sources of life and the power on which all things depended. All this was inexplicable to them and the sun, which was so much to them and so inexplicable, was no less to them than a very powerful god. They worshipped him and consecrated to him a day of the week, named it after him and set it apart for his special worship. In the monuments of Egypt, the temples of Asia, the earliest remains in England and the mysterious fragments of antiquity in America are found traces of this worship and is also testified to by many passages

of Hebrew history in the Bible. In this caste and custom ridden country of ours, the worship of the Sun still retains a very strong hold and the moorning *Pongal* on Sundays and the very general worship offered to the Sun on Sundays of Avani and the special worship to the Sun offered by persons who suffer from eye diseases to such an extent that a proverb "கண்கெட்டபின் சூரியநமஸ்காரம் செய்ததுபோல்" which means that all attempts to gain anything made too late are like the worship of the sun after becoming blind, has come to be based on this worship—all these indicate the very powerful hold which the worship of the Sun has amongst us even in these days.

The moon, you know, may justly be called the "Empress of night". It is the theme of poets. It is so refreshingly beautiful that one fiinds delight in roaming at ease in an open plain, alone or with friends bathed in its cool and silvery rays. This charming heavenly body had another day of the week named after it and consecrated to it. The worship of the moon is very common even now in our country and the whole day fasting and evening *Pongal* on full-moon days so very prevalent in our country testifies to the strong hold which the worship of the moon has amongst us even now. The other days of the week were named after other heavenly bodies and the whole vault of night appeared to our ancestors to have been written with inexplicable mysteries. The eclipses of the sun and the moon appeared to them to be so unnatural that it seemed to them that the sun and moon gods were in some danger. They therefore fasted and prayed and had religious ceremonies performed in connection therewith. The crowd of worshippers that gather together on the sea and river sides on eclipe days for bathing and performing religious ceremonies indicate the strong feelings of awe, reverence and wonder which these phenomena of nature excited in our ancestors. It is sad to observe that, notwithstanding our intellectual

advancement, we are unable to get out of the grip of custom and that expiatory ceremonies on eclipse days are still so prevalent amongst us. They could not explain how these heavenly bodies including the earth stood unsupported in the sky and to the object in which they were most interested, I mean the earth, they found a support in (ஆதிசேஷன்) a serpent god. This serpent god rested on an elephant god and the elephant god on a tortoise. They were unable to proceed further and to find supports *an infinitum*; and left the matter unsolved out of sheer incapacity to propose any reasonable solution.

The terrestrial phenomena were equally puzzling to our ancetors of yore. Our earth itself was a goddess. Water was a goddess; and a god (அக்கினிபகவான்) was found in the fire A god in the phenomena connected with rain (வருணபகவான்) and a god in the wind (வாயுபகவான்) were also found. Their conceptions of special divinities in the natural objects aud forces of nature multiplied and increased and rivers, mountains, forests and other places became peopled with nymphs, elves etc. They found spiritual agencies even amongst many of the phenomena connected with human beings and as a result thereof, there was a very general belief in miracles, astrology, sorcery, witchcraft and possession by evil spirits etc. Times however have changed. Science in every department of nature has made immense progress and the laws which regulate its workings have been ascertained with considerable precision. It is no longer any wonder to us that the earth hangeth upon nothing nor do we require any (ஆதிசேஷன்) serpent god for its support. It is no less a matter of course than that the stone flies from the sling. Every heavenly body is found to be in perpetual motion and be kept in its place by the operation of forces which act in obedience to some definite and fixed laws. The sun which excited so much wonder, awe and reverence and was worshipped

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as a very powerful god is found to be a mere fiery material body one million three hundred and five thousand times larger than our earth and containing three hundred and thirty two thousand times as much matter as our earth. It is found to rotate on its axis in twenty five days seven hours and forty five minutes and to be the centre of the solar system with several planets revolving round it. The earth is found to rotate round itself in twenty four hours and to move round the sun in one year and in so doing it is found to travel at the rate of thousand miles per minute. Can you really conceive of this motion. The most rapid speed of a visible body known to us is that of a shot fired from a powerful gun, which is said to be about 2/3 of a mile per second; but this stupendous body, I mean our earth, travels twenty seven times faster than that. These inconceivable motions have been ascertained with great precision. The motions of other planets have been ascertained with similar exactitude and the periods of motion of the several planets have been found to range from 88 days in the case of Mercury to 164·6 years in the case of Neptune, the remotest planet. The marvellous advance which the science of Astronomy has made will appear from this one incident that when the planet Uranus did not move exactly in the orbit assigned to it by theoritical calculations and when there was thus a discrepancy between observation and theory, a problem was proposed for solution, which was as follows:—"Find out the precise place in the sky at a given time of a planet massive enough to push out of its way the planet Uranus and also its distance from the Sun"; and the problem was solved and as a result thereof, the planet Neptune was discovered which is so far distant from the sun that it takes, as already said, 164·6 years to move round the Sun. The moon which was the theme of poets and excited and still continues to excite very tender feelings is found to be a mere dead mass of matter with no light of its own, with no

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atmosphere, no water, no vegetables and in fact with no life of any kind. It is found to be a mass of mere burnt matter and to be like an extinct valcano. The eclipses of the Sun and Moon over which so much mystery hanged and which were made the occasions for expiatory ceremonies as though gods themselves were invloved in some danger, are found to be mere ordinary phenomena. They belong to the class of simple and ordinary cases of some material objects hidden by some other material objects or their shadows The solar system itself is found to be only one of several, nay, countless thousands of such systems. The vault of night has been so far pierced that the immense, rather, the infinite space is found studded with stars everywhere. Most of the stars are suns, some similar to and others more stupendous than our sun. To the naked eye, not more than 3,000 stars are visible at a time: but astronomers have observed about 500,000 stars pass before thom in an hour. The speed of light has been measured and it is found to travel at the rate of 185,000 miles per second and it is observed by Dr. Martineau that the Universe as conceived in Plato's time is but a toy as compared with the Universe as revealed to us by the discoveries of modern science and that the beams flung from the pole star, when as a youth of thirty the philosopher was detained in the sick room of Socrates could only just reach his own eye when at four score he was about to close it in his death, the said beams travelling all this long period of 50 years at the rate of 185,000 miles per second. The story of absolute creation of this earth has been abandoned. This world is found to have been in the process of formation for an indefinitely long period. The whole solar system was once an incandescent nebulous mass. This mass had a rotation and as it rotated, it flung off in succession its outer rings. These outer rings condensed in their orbits into the planetary spheres. Each in its turn solidified round its molten centre into a world till the sun alone retains its self

luminous glow. This world of ours which so solidified, put on a decent crust, got the water into its hollows and the residuary atmosphere became cool and pure. It then became fit for vegetable life and began with lichens, mosses and ferns. These were gradually modified and new types grew and multiplied and in course of time animal life appeared on the scene and developed into different species till man appeared at the summit and our world has come to be what it is full of vegetable and animal life with the intelligent man crowning the whole. Geology traces the progress of our planet from the earliest beginnings of its separate existence through its various stages of growth down to its present condition of things. It lays before you all the complicated process by which each continent has been built up. It penetrates into the deepest intestines of the earth and shows how the same place was once a land surface, then covered by water, then again a land surface, then again covered by water and so on several times alternately. It lays before our view the rocky framework of the earth, tells us how it is composed and arranged and gives us a history of the changes it has undergone and is undergoing. It exposes to our view the present condition of our globe both in the interior and in the solid crust and tells us what agencies have produced it and what agencies are still at work which bring about constant changes. It tells you the origin and history of the features of the earth's surface continental ridges and ocean basins, plains, valleys and mountains. It explains the causes on which local differences of scenery depend and shows, under what different circumstances and at what widely separated intervals, the hills and mountains in each country have been formed. Botany names and arranges the vegetable productions of the globe. It examines the plants in their earliest stages of development and follows them through all their stages of progress till they attain maturity. It gives you full information about their external forms, their anotomical structure, the func-

tions they perform, their arrangement and classification and their distribution over the globe at the present and at former periods, and it takes a comprehensive view of all the plants which cover the earth from the minutest lichen or moss to the most gigantic productions of the tropics. It marks the relations which subsist between all the members of the vegetable world and traces the mode in which the most despised weeds contribute to the growth of the mighty denizens of the forest. In this way the goddess Earth has been dethroned and dissected and the whole history of her formation from a red hot mass has been traced and held up to our view. Zoology gives you full information about animal kingdom in this earth and physical sciences investigate the laws regulating phenomena which are observed in things without life. Agni Bagavan, Varunan, Vayu Bagavan and all other gods of nature have been thus dethroned and the forces of nature have been snatched from their control. These forces of nature and the mode of their operations have been definitely ascertained measured and calculated. The various forces have been found to be capable of changing their places and of being converted into one another. They have been found to be different forms of one and the same force. The way for the lightning of thunder, which was supposed to be hid from the eyes of all the living has been definitely known and every church steeple bears witness to it. The wonder and mystery from all these things is gone and the forces of nature have been brought under our control and management. They have been made our servants and been made to do a lot of things for us. They have been made to carry our ships through the otherwise impassable oceans. They are made to abridge distances and to carry us by railway trains from one place to another at about 60 miles per hour and more. They are made to carry our messages to far distant places in no moment and they are made to work our mills. The countless benefits which we enjoy by having become able to control and

manage the forces of nature are too well known to be detailed here. The progress of science is still going on at a very rapid stride and the time is perhaps not distant, when we will be able to get rain whenever and whenver we like and when we will be able to travel through the air and to do a great many things of which we have no conception whatever at present. We now know so much that our desire to know more has increased considerably. We do not like to be taken unawares. We wish to have our path clear and open into the distance. We wish to escape the starts of the thicket which may hide we know not what. We think it a gain to stand on a field where nothing is unforseen. Astrology, a belief in which seems to have been prevailing in many parts of the globe and which prevails to a large extent in our country indicates the general desire to penetrate into the future. It seems io me that Astrology can never be a true science. The late Sir. T. Madhave Row has written a book on this subject and eneavoured to show that astrology cannot be depended upon. Any branch of knowledge to be reduced to a science must be subject to certain fixed laws and should have invariable antecedents indicating the succession of their necessary consequences. The facts and circumstances on which astrology is based are so varied and complicated and so discordant and out of joint with one another that there is no room for any generalization, so as to predict the course of life of every individual. The circumstances under which each man is born and brought up have no agreement whatever with those of any other single individual, much less with those of any number of persons; and it is not, therefore, possible to build any science of astrology, such as is believed in by many of our brethren.

Many of you might have observed that, in making astrological calculations, cowries are largely used. especially when one wishes to be exact in his prediction

in a complicated matter. Some cowries are taken at random from a heap and counted and the whole calculation and prediction depend upon the number of cowries taken, which is purely a matter of chance. Can you make up your mind to believe that, when the initial factor is a matter of chance, the prediction arrived therefrom, though after numerous intermediate exact calculations, can be anything but a matter of chance. The whole calculation is *ab initio* invalid and the superstructure must be dooomed to go to ruins. John Stuart Mill says in a certain place that those who base their conclusions on insufficient and untrustworthy materials will have to share the fate reserved to astrologers. He speaks with so much contempt about astrologers and believers in astrology, and I think that the remarks of John Stuart Mill are quite correct and in this opinion of mine, I have the support of the late distinguished statesman and thinker Sir. T. Madhava Row and of many other distinguished thinkers. Be this as it may, it is clear that the belief in astrology which was prevalent in ancient days and which still prevails to a large extent in our country, especially amongst the masses is an index to the general desire of mankind to penetrate into the future and to have the path clear and open into the distance. The researches of science appear to encourage us in cherishing this desire and in hoping for its realization. The intellect delights in unravelling the complicated tangle of events and in tracing how the parts combine to make the whole. In the words of Dr. Martineau "If science ever indulges an Elysian dream, it is to live in a scene where all can be predicted for the future and interpreted in the past; when the intricate shall be only a cluster of the simple, and the mysterious a forgotten haze that once veiled the plain; and no distance dwarf it and from the perspective of thought, the shadowed glades and the curving sea and the dip of the horizon shall take themselves away." Is this craving of our nature legitimate? and will it be

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satisfied though at a distant future? There is nothing wrong in aspiring to penetrate into the future. God governs by fixed laws and has given us intelligence which He means we should cultivate and develope to the utmost possible extent. It is our duty and privilege to get a clear insight into the rules by which God governs us and by which the material universe is regulated. The very circumstance that material forces act in unbroken order and with unfailing regularity is a clear indication that God means that we should try to know them and that thereby that habits of industry and a character of self-exertion and self-reliance should be formed in us. If no such uniformity prevailed, if the properties of material objects and the effect of material causes were not always the same, if the fire which warms us to day should freeze us tomorrow, if what is nourishing food to-day should prove poisonous tomorrow and if thus all the results of our conduct were a matter of entire uncertainty, there would be an end to all possibility of human labour, all motive for exertion. Complaint is often raised that there is much suffering in this earth and that the innocent suffer with the wrong doers, as a consequence of the uniform operation of natural laws. This complaint is so much felt that there is a feeling of relief with some, when they hear and read that God sometimes suspends the operation of natural laws and interferes by miracles to bring about good ends. This is talked of lightly and as a matter of course and as in no way involving anything prejudicial to the wisdom and power of God; nay, suspension of natural laws in special cases is often put forth as evidence of God's omnipotent power and the question is seriously asked whether God is not omnipotent and whether He could not bring about such occurrences as are reported in the records of distinguished saints and prophets. No believer in the free will of a personal Deity can deny the possibility of such miracles. No one can deny that God has power to produce such miracles if He should choose to

do so. But this means that the original plan is faulty, that God did not see all that could happen, that He is unable to bring about the desired result by adhering to the laws which He laid down and without needing to introduce any change now and then. Miraculous interferences imply, therefore, want of sufficient fore-knowledge and sufficient power. These alleged miraculous interferences do not appear to me to add to the glory and power of God. We may, therefore, take as facts established that God always acts in the physical world in unbroken order and with unfailing regularity and we have found that this unfailing regularity in the operation of natural forces tends to produce and develope habits of industry and a character of self-exertion and self-reliance. It is, therefore, I say our privilege and duty to get a clear insight into the laws of nature. Our intelligence will thereby be considerably developed and habits of industry and a character of self reliance will be formed in us. We should not, therefore, pause in the advance we have already made. We should push on our researches to the very best of our power. We may thereby gain such further control over natural forces as are not yet dreamt of. Our knowledge may be considerably extended, our action may be precise and our strength may be economised. There may be no error, no waste and no confusion in our career. Our physical comforts and conveniences may considerably be enhanced and our material prosperity may increase by leaps and bounds. Notwithstanding all this, the question is, Will we be able to foresee all our future? Will there be no thickets hiding we know not what? Will we be able to stand on a field where nothing will be unforeseen? Will there be no uncertainties and contingencies of life? Even a very superficial observation will show that there are very many paths we cannot enter. There are impassable limits which baffle us and turn us back. The contingencies of life are manifold and they have to be faced with as much uncertainty and with as

much diffidence as we have been doing. The date of death hovers over us and alights now here, now there. In the words of Dr. Martineau, " the birth of children, the incidence of disease, the specialities of mental constitution, nay, even such outward things as the shipwreck and the fire and the missile flight defy our foresight and though intensely affecting our welldoing, hide themselves in the inscrutable order." The uncertainties of life have become proverbial and been the theme of poets and eminent thinkers. James Shirley, a poet of the 17th. century, observes as follows:—

" The glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things
There is no armour against fate
Death lays his icy hands on Kings
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade."

Sir Walter Raleigh observes as follows on the "Uncertainty of human happiness." " If we truly examine the difference of both conditions—to wit, of the rich and mighty whom we call fortunate and of the poor and oppressed whom we count wretched, we shall find the happiness of the one and the miserable state of the other, so tied by God to the very instant and both so subject to interchange (witness the sudden downfall of the greatest princes and the speedy uprising of of the meanest persons) as the one has nothing so certain whereof to boast nor the other so uncertain whereof to bewail itself. For there is no man so assured of his honour, of his riches, health or life but that he may be deprived of either or all, the very next hour or day to come. What the evening will bring with it is uncertain and yet ye cannot tell, saith

St. James, what shall be tomorrow. To day he is set up and tomorrow, he shall not be found, for, he is turned into dust and his purpose perisheth."

Shakespeare in his "Hamlet's soliloquy on death," observes as regards man's life on this earth.

"For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of Despis'd love, the laws delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes."

Dryden in his "Picture of life" says

"When I consider life, it is all cheat,
Yet, fooled with hope, men favour the deceit
Trust on and think tomorrow will repay,
Tomorrow is falser than the former day
Lies worse and while it says "We shall be blest
With some new joys, cuts off what we possessed."

Dr. William Sherlock, a writer of the 17th century says "Our lives are so very uncertain that we know not to-day but that we may die tomorrow." The Revd. Robert Hall in his funeral sermon for the princess Charlotte of Wales says "fired with the ambition of equalling or surpassing the most distinguished of her predecessors, she probably did not despair of reviving the remembrance of the brightest parts of their story and of once more attaching the epoch of British glory to the annals of a female reign. It is needless to add that the nation went with her and probably outstripped her in these delightful anticipations. We fondly hoped that a life so inestimable would be protracted to a distant period and that, after diffusing the blessings of a just and enlightened administration and being surrounded by numerous progeny, she would gradually, in a good old age, sink under the horizon amidst the embraces of her family and the benedictions of her country. But alas; these delight-

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ful visions are fled and what do we behold in their room but the funeral pall and shroud, a palace in mourning, a nation in tears and the shadow of death settled over both like a could. O the unspeakable vanity of human hopes, thei ncurable blindness of man to futurity ever doomed to grasp at shadow, to seize with avidity what turns to dust and ashes in his hands; to sow the wind and reap the whirlwind." Our most renowned poet Thiruvalluvar observes as follows:—

"நெருநல் உளனொருவன் இன்றில்லை யென்னும்
பெருமையுடைத்து இவ்வுலகு."

which means you find that this world's characteristic is that he that was alive yesterday is not live to-day.

"ஒருபொழுதும் வாழ்வதறியார்."

We are so ignorant of the future that we cannot know that we shall live even for a day more. As regards riches, he observes

"கூத்தாட்டவைக் குழாத்தற்றே பெருஞ்செல்வம்
போக்குமது விளிந்தற்று."

Worldly riches are like a crowd in a dancing place. They come to a man like the said crowd and pass away from him like the same

"அற்காவியல் பிற்றுச் செல்வம்."

Worldly riches have no certain durability in them. They are transient. Thayumanavar observes to the same effect. He says

"இன்றைக்கிருந்தாரை நாளைக்கிருப்பரென்
றெண்ணவோ விடமில்லையே."

which means that life is so uncertain that it is not possible to foresee that he who is alive to day will be alive tormorrow. I think it is needless to quote from great thinkers and sages any more. All of us know

and feel that life and many of our worldly possessions are uncertain and that sceptre and crown must tumble down equally with the poor crooked scythe and spade, that no man can be assured of his honour, of his riches, health or life but that he may be deprived of either or all, the very next hour, or the day to come, that we do not know what the evening or the morrow will bring, that we fondly hope that tomorrow will be better but that the tomorrow is falser than the previous day, that the world's chief characteristic and boast is that the man that was alive yesterday is not live today and that we suffer from inscrutable blindness to futurity. Notwithstanding, therefore, all our scientific researches and our advanced kmowledge, and notwithstanding the immense control we already have over the forces of nature and the still greater control we hope to have, it is but too plain that there are many things in heaven and earth which are not dreamt of by us, in our philosophical and scientific flights. There are as already stated, impassable limits which baffle us and turn us back. The many contingencies of life connot be reduced to certainties and must remain so forever, however far we may advance in our knowledge and control over natural forces.

The question now arises whether we have reason to complain of these uncertainties of life or whether they have a definite purpose inthe scheme of life, for which we should be thankful, instead of raising a tone of complaint. We, no doubt feel that we have a grievance in the irreducible uncertainties; and we try to get rid of them by trying to find equivalents for the foreknowledge we do not have. Life insurance, fire insurance and so many other insurances are the substitutes we apply for the contingencies of life. In the words of Dr. Martineau we thereby "secure ourselves against a shock and establish a basis to make our reckoning safe and though we cannot study the uncertain sea on which we ride, we place in equilibrium a compass that shall

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direct the helm." If all our life's interest could thus be reduced to rule, we might be prepared for every contingency. Nothing may take us by surprise. We may have no occasion to retract and everything that concerns us may be looked upon, as happening with the certainty of fate. But what would be the nature of the life that would be formed and developed under such circumstances. Habits would become supreme. We will be able to turn out a great quantity of work and we would then be more or less like machines, that turn out the expected quantity of work. The exercise of the soul would thereby be considerably reduced. The value of our soul consists not in what it is able to turn out in the form of work and material possessions which may be measured, weighed, calculated but in what it is and can be in itself. Our purpose in life is not to become, and work like, mere machines. Our ideal of humanity is not the largest outer product and is not the mere development of the intellect and the will. God is our Father and we are His children and the chief and the most important purpose of our life is the growth of our love towards God and towards one another. It is in love that our life finds its fulfilment. All other things are subsidiary to this. In my essay on "Life's High School and College." delivered at the last anniversrry of this association, I tried to show that "our life on earth is only a preparatory stage, that this world is a nursery for the soul beautifully adaptd for its growth and development and for the exercise and culture of its moral and spiritual powers, that this world, which is a great educational institution, may be divided into four departments, the elementary school, the secondary school, the high school and the college of life and that it is in the college of life, which is the highest department, man is taught to love God as his Father and human beings as his brethren and that it is in the instructions he receives here, his life attains its fulfilment. The highest purpose of life being then the devolopment of

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human love, all conditions of life which favour its growth must be thankfully received and no tone of complaint showld be raised If we now look at the contingencies of our life, about which we appear to feel a sort of grievance, with this enlarged vision of the highest object of life which God has in view, we will find that the inequalities and the uncertainties of life are just the very conditions which are most essential for the birth, development, and freshening of human love. If all were similarly situated and were in possession of equally good conditions of life, there would be no room for sympathy. It is because there are inequalities amongt us, young and old, weak and strong, bright and sad, happy and miserable, diseased and healthy, and so on that sympathies are aroused in our otherwise dull souls. These sympathies carry us in all directions and teach us to love. The uncertainties of life make the love so born, grow and develop itself. If all things were smooth with us and nothing unexpected should happen, we are likelv to take it as a matter of course. We will take life easily and the usual expected routine is not likely to give any exercise to our souls. It will be otherwsie, if now and then, we have to face the uncertainties of life. A master has a faithful servant. The servant is well paid and he, in turn, attends to the interests of his master as much as his own and there is no room for any complaint on either side. When matters go on thus smoothly, the master is likely to be carried away with the idea that the servant receives ample reward for his work: that he is bound to do as much as he does and that there is nothing which calls for his special notice. There are no feelings of warmth felt towards the servant and everything is expected from him as a matter of course. The servent suddenly falls ill and his life hangs in the balance. The usual course of his business is disturbed. He finds that mere money cannot produce everything. He begins to see the real worth of his servant and his sympathies towards him are aroused and he begins to

love him with a warmth which he never felt before. The more uncertain his recovery, the greater becomes his sympathy and love. He tries to get him round by all the means in his power. He engages the very best doctor for him and carefully attends to all the doctor's instructions. All the sacrifice he makes on his servant's behalf nourishes his love for him and makes it grow luxuriantly and the efforts he puts forth and the tenderness he feels are in proportion to the uncertainty in the matter. If the servant finally recovers, he feels grateful to God that such a faithful servant has been spared and feels an attachment towards the servant, which he could never have dreamt of before. If the servant eventually dies, then too he feels that he has lost a valuable soul and the memory of his servant hallows his attachment towards him. Ever more, he is a different being from what he was before. All this could not have been, if there were no uncertainty in the matter. We have a friend, whose value we do not sufficiently realize when life goes smoothly with all in whom we are interested and when we think that nothing is precious. Suddenly the friend lies stretched before us with an illness and his life begins to look frail. We instantly feel how little we have prized it. His look and pale features draw out the tender cord in us and make it vibrate in a manner we never felt before. Why this? If we knew for certain that he would be well again soon, this feeling of tenderness could not have sprung. The crisis sitting upon his face and the suggested moment of trembling between life and death, the haunting dread and the shadow of the morrow—it is these that produce the tenderness in us. Eminent thinkers and writers often speak as a matter of surprise that people should behave so badly, notwithstanding the uncertainties of life which serve as perpetual warnings to them. The great Tiruvalluvar says

"ஒருபொழுதும் வாழ்வதறியார்கருதுப
கோடியுமல்லபல,"

This means that people do not know that they will live even for another minute and yet what they set their minds upon is not only one crore but many. He thus condemns the distracted and aimless thoughts of people set upon purely worldly things and tells them that the uncertainties of life should lead them, turn their minds upon what is substantial i. e. upon the development of their souls.

If life had not the interest of an ever opening plot with the future hidden to the last, we are likely to become indifferent and unsympathetic. A husband or a son goes on a long voyage and in the last embrace before parting, there is a tenderness and reverence manifested, which we do not find on ordinary occasions. What is this owing to? Is it not the consciousness that when they are separated, they do not know what may happen. If there should be no danger in the night, no disease in the day, if everything was assured beforehand and if man should be sure of living a fixed number of years without anything to tremble for in the meanwhile, where, I may ask, will be the room for manifestation and development of any tender feelings. Everything will go on like clock-work; and the very discipline intended for the birth and development of our conscience and affections will be no where. In the words of Dr. Martineau " Unless all character is to perish, the contingencies must stay. The tacit mutual dependence, the secret suspicion that here or there, the ground which looks so solid is undermined, the constant possibility of a total change of parts in the drama of our life and so, the silent wonder that mingles with every scene, these are the freshing powers breathing on what else were common or unclean and meeting and startling us like angels encountered in the street. Whatever depth there may be in our poor love, whatever reverence speaks in our rough voice, flows into from the world unseen." There is therefore no reason whatever to complain of the

uncertain future, no reason whatever to complain of our precarious existence. They have definite purpose in our education. They make us real men and God's children. They develop the most important parts of our nature. They make us conscientious and loving. The sufferings and uncertainties of life have a great educational value. We are not here for getting riches. We are not here for living long life. However wealthy we may be, however long we may live, however far our dominions may extend, these will not satisfy us. Our desire in these things, if cherished, will go on increasing. Thayumanavar has a well known stanza on this point.

"ஆசைக்கோரளவில்லை அகிலமெல்லாம்கட்டி
ஆளினும் கடன்மீதிலே யாணைசெலுமினவர்
அளகேசனிகராக அம்பொன்மிக வைத்தபேரும்
நேசித்துரசவாத வித்தைக்கலைந்திடுவர் நெடுநாளிரு
நிலையாகவேயினும் காயகற்பந்தேடி [ந்தபேரும்
நெஞ்சுபுண்ணவரெல்லாம்" etc.

This means there is no limit to our desires. Those who may reign over the whole world will desire to extend their authority over seas ; those who may be as rich as குபேரன் or lord of wealth will desire to have more and try to know the art of converting baser metals into gold and those who have lived long will desire to live perpetually and trouble themselves for getting a drug which will make their body everlasting.

We thus see that there is no real use in setting our hearts upon these perishable things of this life. We are here for a far different purpose. We are here for getting our conscience and affections enriched and for this purpose, the contingencies of life are absolutely necessary. Our life's worth does not consist in its lenght or its worldly possessions. A good and well

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acted life is the best life, however short its duration may be and however little its worldly possessions may be. The adversities and contingencies of life are the real factors which shape our life in the right direction. Chaucer remarks that "it is better to have a little good with love of God than to have much good and less the love of his Lord God," "better it is to be a good man and have little good and treasure than to be a shrew and have great riches." Sir Thomas More writes to his lady when he heard that his barns and some of those of his neighbours had been burnt down that "God sent us all that we have lost and since He has by such a chance taken it away again, His pleasure be fulfilled. Let us never grudge thereat but take it in good worth and heartily thank him as well for adversity as for prosperity. And peradventure, we have more cause to thank Him for our loss than for winning, for His wisdom better seeth what is good for us than we do ourselves." Sir Henry Watson remarks that

"In small proportions we just beauties see
In short measures life may perfect be."

Another writer remarks that "the virtue of adversity is fortitude and that adversity is the clearer revelation of God's favour" It follows that we should not complain about our ignorance of the future. We are gainers by such ignorance. Let us therefore take life as it is comes with a cheerful and resigned spirit, fully trusting that God sees best and that everything is calculated to promote our good. Let us be prepared to look upon the contigencies of life of our best instructors. Let us get ourselves trained in such a way that the following precepts may be the guiding principles of our life and have firm faith that, in getting ourselves so trained, the contingencies of life are the most important factors:—

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(1) "Thou shalt love the Lord the God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind."

(2) "Love thy neighbours as thyself." nay "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

(3) Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them."

Gentlemen, I have done and beg leave to close this essay with this wish of mine that we must try to live like those sages who, in the words of Sir Walter Raliegh, "having had the grace to value worldly vanities at no more than their own price, do, by retaining the comfortable memory of a well acted life, behold death without dread and the grave without fear and embrace both as necessary guides to endless glory."

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Majesty of Law.

AN eminent German writer has remarked that, in the Universe, there is nothing more wonderful than the starry Heavens above and the mind within. This remark of the German writer appears to me to be a truism. A general survey of the Universe, however superficial it may be, will convince us that it is impossible to conceive of anything grander and more wonderful than the starry Heavens above and the mind within. Any one seated in an open plain, on a cloudless starry night and directing his eyes towards the Heavens and seeing countless stars twinkling up above the world so high like so many diamonds in the sky, will see how grand, picturesque and beautiful the sight is; and he is likely to go down on his knees with awe and reverence. It is not however the mere physical appearance that is so grand and awe inspiring. It is the law reigning therein, the law that regulates these Heavenly bodies and keeps them in their places that strikes him with worder and makes him bow down his head with reverence. On Napolean's voyage to Egypt, some French philosophers were one evening busily occupied in arguing with him that there could be no God. "They had proved it, to their satisfaction, by all manner of logic." But Napolean looking up to the stars answered "Very ingenious, Messeiurs; but who made those stars." The athestic logic melted away before him like the ice before the sun and ran off like water; reality asserted itself and the great fact stared him in the face. "Who made all those stars." Those stupendous bodies shining so brilliantly and beautifully and kept in their

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places by laws acting with mathematical accuracy brought home to him the truth that they were not there by mere chance. To his mind, it was clear as it must be to every one who really thinks on the subject that they had their creator and law giver. The same sentiment is expressed by our great Thayumanavar in the following line "அண்டகோடிகள் அந்தரத்தில் தாமரல் நிலநிற்கவில்லையா", which means as you know "Do not crores of Heavenly bodies stand unsupported in the sky without swerving from their appointed places." Let us now look at these heavenly bodies a little more closely. To the naked eye, not more than 3000 stars are visible at a time. But the number of stars actually existing is countless. Sir W. Hershell, a very famous astronomer observed one hundred and sixteen thousand stars pass before him in quarter of an hour; and on another occasion he observed two hundred and fifty thousand stars pass before him in 41 minutes. These stars are so far distant from us and from one another that if you try to form an idea of the stellar distances our minds will become giddy and confused. Such standards as miles and even millions of miles will be quite unmanageable in dealing with these distances. The unit of stellar distance is therefore taken to be the distance travelled by light in one year. Light travels at the rate of 185,000 miles per second. The distance between the sun and earth is abont 92 millions of miles and the distance that is travelled by light in one year is 63 thousand times the distance between the sun and the earth. This distance, gentlemen, that is to say, 63 thousand times the distance between the sun and the earth is taken as the unit of stellar measurement and any other unit will be quite unmanageable and useless. The nearest star which is called Centanri is said to be so for distant from us that a ray of light from it will not reach us in less than 4½ years. Dr Martineau says in his Seat of Authority in Religion when speaking of the immense extension of the Universe in space that the Universe as

conceived in Plato's time was but a toy as compared with the Universe as revealed to us by the discoveries of modern science, and that the beams flung from the pole star when as a youth of 30 the philosopher was detained in the sick room of Socrates could only just reach his own eye when at fourscore, he was about to close it in his death. Conceive gentlemen, if you can, the distance of a star from us if it will take 50 years for a ray of light from it to reach us at the rate of 185 thousand miles per second. This is not however the whole story. There are stars at considerably greater distances from us than the pole star and their distances may not be capable of being measured even by stellar units. Some stars which appear to us as single stars are in reality double stars revolving round each other in regular eliptical orbits. These are called Binary stars. In the same way there are three or four or more stars that move in close proximity to each other and these are called family parties of stars. The appearance of these stars as one or as a less number than they really are, is due to optical illusion. The distance is so great. Space is infinite and all this infinite space is studded with stars which must be countless. Dr Martineau says in another place that as for the rays of certain stars we are too soon to see many a one that started in the hour when Plato was born and that they are not yet half way. This remark of Dr Martineau may perhaps give you an adequate idea as to the immensity of space and as to how it is studded with stars even in the remotest parts. However great the distance and however vast the Universe as revealed to us by the discoveries of modern times the same laws hold good everywhere. The law of gravitation acts precisely in the same way everywhere in the Universe as it does in our own planet. The light which comes from the remotest regions of space, when it reaches our telescope, is reflected by the same laws as the beams of this morning sun. The prism breaks it into the

same colours and bends them in the same degrees. The laws of heat and expansion, which have been ascertained by us here, hold good in the remotest regions of space. There is no chaos anywhere in the Universe and no lawless regions. Law reigns supreme everywhere. Such is the grandeur and majesty of law. The planet in which we live, though appearing to be still, is, as you know, in perpetual motion. In the same way every Heavenly body is in perpetual motion and is kept in its place by the operation of forces which act in obedience to some definite and fixed laws. We often call some stars as fixed stars but they are not really so. They only appear to be so. They are so far distant from us that their motions require several centuries to accumulate before they can make changes of arrangement such as the naked eye can detect. Some stars blaze forth in the Heavens in places in which there were none before, and after an existence for a few weeks or months fade away and are seen no more. These are called temporary stars. The reason is that they move within our range when they are visible to us and at other times in far off regions from which their lights are not perceptible to us. A certain number of stars vary from time to time in their light and are therefore called variable stars. This is also due to their perpetual motion according to certain fixed and definite laws. A study of the planet in which we live and of the solar system of which our earth forms a part is likely to give us a fair idea of the laws which regulate the motions of the heavenly bodies however far they may be from us. In fact the heavenly bodies which appear to us as stars are in reality so many suns. George F. Chamber says in his story of the Stars that "Our sun itself may be regarded as a bright star. It probably represents for us on the earth neither more nor less than what Sirius or other bright stars represent to the inhabitants of other worlds in far off

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regions of space. If we could travel from earth a long way towards Sirius we would probably find Sirius to grow into what we should without reservation call a sun, while our Sun would deteriorate into what we now call a star." In another place he says "We, on the earth, are placed on a certain moving body called a planet, which is one of a number of planets circulating round the Sun as their chief ruler or centre. Is this state of things unique or do other suns exist? Do other bodies exist which are centres of life and motion analaguons to our Sun? No one who has seen a bright double star with its one or more companions and still more, no one, who has seen the many bright stars with companions which are to be found scattered up and down the Heavens can doubt that the answer to the above question must undoubtedly be in the affirmative. In other words, there are in the Universe many suns each with its cortege of planets." Gentlemen we thus see that our sun is not the only sun in the Universe. There are very many suns. They are very far from us and therefore appear to us as stars. Each of these stars has planets revolving round it. A study of the solar system is therefore likely to give us, as I said before, a fair idea of the laws which regulate the motions of the Heavenly bodies in far off regions also. By the solar system is to be understood the sun which is the material and visible centre of life and heat and control those bodies which are dependent upon the sun and which circulate round it at various distances. These bodies are known as planets and comets. All the planets derive their light and heat from the sun except perhaps Jupiter, which is said to possess a little inherent light of its own. Comets, on the other hand, shine as a rule with intrinsic light of their own. Planets are divided into Primary planets and Secondary planets. Primary planets circulate round the sun directly. Secondary planets revolve round a primary planet in the first instance and with it and therefore only in a secondary sense circulate round the

same colours and bends them in the same degrees. The laws of heat and expansion, which have been ascertained by us here, hold good in the remotest regions of space. There is no chaos anywhere in the Universe and no lawless regions. Law reigns supreme everywhere. Such is the grandeur and majesty of law. The planet in which we live, though appearing to be still, is, as you know, in perpetual motion. In the same way every Heavenly body is in perpetual motion and is kept in its place by the operation of forces which act in obedience to some definite and fixed laws. We often call some stars as fixed stars but they are not really so. They only appear to be so. They are so far distant from us that their motions require several centuries to accumulate before they can make changes of arrangement such as the naked eye can detect. Some stars blaze forth in the Heavens in places in which there were none before, and after an existence for a few weeks or months fade away and are seen no more. These are called temporary stars. The reason is that they move within our range when they are visible to us and at other times in far off regions from which their lights are not perceptible to us. A certain number of stars vary from time to time in their light and are therefore called variable stars. This is also due to their perpetual motion according to certain fixed and definite laws. A study of the planet in which we live and of the solar system of which our earth forms a part is likely to give us a fair idea of the laws which regulate the motions of the heavenly bodies however far they may be from us. In fact the heavenly bodies which appear to us as stars are in reality so many suns. George F. Chamber says in his story of the Stars that "Our sun itself may be regarded as a bright star. It probably represents for us on the earth neither more nor less than what Sirius or other bright stars represent to the inhabitants of other worlds in far off

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sun. These secondary planets are usually called satellites and in popular language called moons. Our Moon for instance is a Secondary planet and revolves in the first instance round our earth in about 28 days and with our earth revolves round the sun in a year. The planets forming the solar system and revolving round the Sun are, in the order of their distances reckoning from the Sun outwords, as follows:—

1. Mercury. 2. Venus. 3. The earth. 4. Mars. 5. Jupiter. 6. Saturn. 7. Uranus. 8. Neptune.

For a long tims the Ptolemic system was upheld. This system regarded the earth as the centre with the Moon, Mercury, Venus, The sun, Mars, Jupiter & Saturn revolving round it. It is now accepted as correct beyond doubt that the Sun is the centre of the Solar System and that all the planets revolve round the Sun. This theory was propounded by Copernicus in the 16th century. When he gave out his theory, he stood alone and the whole world was ranged against him. Biblical authority was said to be against him & all the religious and scientific world joined issues with him. He however stood dauntless and convinced the world in course of time that his theory was the correct one. This shows how a person is bound to stick up to what he believes to be true. Mere numerical strength is no guarantee for the truth of any theory or doctrine. The majority do not think for themselves. A great thinker arises and propounds a certian doctrine. He is able to convince some and succeeds in getting a few followers. Some others who have regard for these accept the doctrine as correct without questioning. The descendants of these persons believe the same on the authority of their ancestors. In course of time antiquity sanctifies the doctrine and it is considered a sacrilege to question its correctness. Thus in the course of some centuries the doctrine comes to be believed in by a large number of followers. Most of these do not

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know the why and wherefore of this doctrine. When traced to its source this theory may stand for its correctness on the authority of a single individual, its first propounder. Another great thinker may arise and propound an exactly opposite theory, which in course of time, by the same process, is likely to be held as correct by an equally large number of followers and this is how conflicting doctrines are held to be correct by large masses of mankind. Numerical strength should not therefore scare us away. Everyone is bound to think for himself and to stick np to what he believes to be true. " He is a slave who dares not be in the right with two or three." I will even go further and say that he is a slave who dares not be in the right though standing alone. Herein alone lies our dignity as human beings. Herein consists our privelege as the sons of God. Now to return from this digression. All the planets, as already stated revolve round the sun at various distances and their path round the sun are eliptical and called orbits. Besides the motion round the sun, each planet has an axial rotation, that is to say, each planet rotates on its own axis. This motion round its own axis is the cause of night and day. Mercury, the nearest planet to the sun, rotates on its axis in 24 hours 5 minutes and 30 second and revolves round the sun in 88 days. Our earth rotates on its axis in 24 hours and moves round the sun in one year. Jupiter revolves round the sun in 11·8 years. Neptune, the remotest planet, revolves round the sun in 164.6 years. In this connection I should say that our ancestors appear to have been very good astronomers. The number of days in our Hindu year is equal to the number of days in a year as calculated by the western astronomers, which represents the period of motion of the earth round the sun. One வியாழ ஆண்டு is said to be 12 years which in round numbers, is equal to the period of motion of Jupiter round the sun. Now to resume, the periods of motion of the several planets round their axes vary from about 10 hours and odd to

24 hours and odd and the periods of motion round the sun from 88 days to 164.6 years. Mercury, the nearest planet to the sun, is situated at a distance of 36 millions of miles from it, the earth 92 millions of miles and neptune, the remotest planet, at a distance of 2792 millions of miles from it. The stability of these heavenly bodies consists in their perpetual and rapid motions and they are made to keep up their relative positions by the very motions they are subject to. The velocity with which they move, is almost inconceivable. Take for instance our earth which appears to us to be still and motionless. It completes a journey of 583 millions of miles in its orbit round the sun in a year. The speed must be very great indeed. We believe it is moving rapidly ; but we do not adequately recognise or realize it. Besides the motion in its orbit, the earth has a diarnul motion round itself which is abont 1000 miles an hour at the equator. For every motion round its own axis which it completes in 24 hours, it moves in its orbit a distances of one million 500 thousand miles. We cannot speak of this long journey and rapid motion except as inconceivable. We connot imagine the velocliy. The speed is 1000 miles a minute. A Railway train moving at the rate of 60 miles an hour is said to travel very fast and when it dashes by us we will not be able to recognise any passenger in it. The speed of a short fired from a powerfull gun is said to be about ¾ of a mile per second and this speed is said to be the quickest rate of motion of a visible body known to us ; but this stupendous body, I mean our earth, travels 27 times faster than the shot fired from a most powerful gun. The mere rapidity of the motion of such a stupendous body, wounderful as it is, is not even half the truth. The real grandeur and majestic glory of the laws which regulate the forces, which move the world so inconceivably fast consist in this, that the journey is completed and the race run in the appointed time without being late or before time even to the extent of the minutest fraction

of a second. There is absolute exactness. This is really miraculous and the glory of this miraculous accuracy will be better conceived when we understand that this great orbit of 583 millions of miles is divided into 4 parts in each of which there is a change in the rapidity of the motion and that this change is necessary to keep the earth from flying off from the sun or from being drawn to it. Gentlemen, conceive of this world which is ordinarily said to be a little planet and which is so as compared with Jupiter, which is 1200 times larger, but which is yet so large that if you would stand on a platform in space to see the earth pass by you at the rate of about 18 miles per second it would take full 8 minutes to pass:—conceive of this stupendous body which appears to be at absolute rest passing in its journey round the sun at the inconceivably rapid rate of 1000 miles per minute and completing its journey exactly at the appointed time, all this time revolving round itself and taking with it its satellite, which, in its turn, revolves round itself and also round the earth and which some times retards and at other times augments the rate of motion and subject also all this time to the influence of the other planets;—conceive of all this and say whether there is anything more wonderful and majestic than this. How very grand, majestic and unspeakably glorious are the laws which bring about such miraculous results. The laws which regulate the motions of other planets are precisely the same as those which regulate the motions of our earth: and every planet is kept in its place by the operation of forces which act in obedince to fixed and well-defined laws. The motions of these stupendous Heavenly bodies are regulated with such mathematical and miraculous accuracy that any one thinking about the same is sure to exclaim that here is the wonder of wonders and that it ts impossible for him to think of anything more wonderful and majestic than this. How very accurately the motions of these heavenly bodies are regulated may be shown to you by another very

striking instance. You know that Uranus is the remotest but one of the planets composing the solar system. This planet in revolving round the sun did not move exactly in the orbit assigned to it by theoretical calculations. There were discordances between observation and theory as regards the orbit of this planet. The regin of law everywhere in the universe is an established fact and the conclusion was therefore come to that the deviation of Uranus should be the result of the operation of some unknown forces and that there should exist a planet more remote from the sun than Uranus, massive enough to make its influence felt on Uranus. Astronomers set about discovering this unknown planet and the problem for solution was " Find out the precise place in the sky at a given time of planet massive enough to push out of its way the planet Uranus and also its distance from the sun. A Cambridge student solved the problem and succeeded in discovering the required planet in 1845. His investigation was not however pursued further and his discovery remained unverified. A French astronomer who was also independently working at this problem about the same time discovered the planet and had his discovery verified so as to place the matter beyond doubt. It was thus that Neptune was discovered. Need I say anything further about the grand, majestic, fixed and immutable laws which guide the motions of our earth and the other heavenly bodies. I think, however, that this part of the subject will be incomplete without a few words on the Sun itself. It is a stupendous fiery mass one million 8 hundred and 5 thousand times larger than our earth and contains three hundred and thirty two thousand times as much matter as our earth. It is the natural and visible centre of life and heat and is the ruler and life of the planetary system. It is true as already stated that there are very many suns and very many solar systems like our own in the Universe; but to us, the sun is emphatically the most pre-eminent heavenly body in creation and unquestion-

ably occupies the foremost place. It is the fountain of our light and heat and is the grand agent which sustains animal and vegetable life. It is impossible to from an adequate idea of the potency of the sun's rays. The amount received by the earth is only a feeble part and is calculated to be two thousand and three hundred millonth part of the whole. Small as this is as compared with the full potency of the rays, this small amount is equal to the light given by half a million of full moons shining all at the same time. This stupendous fiery body, which is relatively at rest as compared with the planets, is also in perpetual motion and rotates on its axis in 25 days 7 hours and 45 minutes. We have thus the sun, a stupendous fiery mass, at the centre rotating on its axis. The planets situated at distances varying from 36 millions to two thousand 792 millions of miles rotate on their axes and move with inconceivable velocity round the sun and complete their journeys in periods varing from 88 days to 164·6 years. These massive bodies situated at such vast distances act and react upon one another and form one entire whole. Their motions are regular and orderly and there is no slip or mistake. They are punctual to the minutest fraction of a second. Their stability consists in orderly motions which are regulated by fixed and well-defined laws. So much so, that if their motions were arrested the whole myriads of the heavenly bodies would dash together and perish. The same order and the same obedience to laws prevails every where in the Universe. Law is so majestic. It seems to my mind to be clear that this orderly and beautiful Universe should have been shaped by an All-intelligent and Almighty Being. The mighty atomtheory cannot hold good. To suppose that this Universe has originated from the tiniest cellules holding forces not worth mentioning without a directing mind, appears to me to be a mere trick of the imagination Modern discoveries have no doubt shown that the theory that this Universe was created in a week about 6 thousand years ago is

not a tenable doctrine. It has been shown that this Universe is a growth through immeasurable ages. But it has been a growth from ruder elements to more refined combinations. The progress has ever been upwards and proceeded along the path of law. In the words of Dr. Martinean we observe "a tissue of intellectual order infinitely wide and a history of ascending growth immeasurably prolonged." This order, this design, this ascending growth and this progress along the path of law clearly indicate a designing, intelligent and almighty mind as the author of the Universe we see before us. We may well exclaim with Thayumanavar "அண்டகோடிகள் அந்தரத்தில் தாழாமல் நில நிற்க வில்லையா" and we may also exclaim with the great Napoleon "but who made those stars." Now a few words on the mind within. Hereto we find law working in all its majestic glory but the method of working is different. We found in the physical Universe that obedience to law was absolute. Those stupendous bodies had no option in the matter. They must move in the path cut out for them and in absolute obedience to the laws which regulated their motions. But here a different rule prevails. Certain laws are given to us for adoption but we are not coerced to adopt them. We are left free. We have a discretionary power given te us to obey or not the laws given for our guidance. Let us now see what these laws are and why we are left free. The faculties of mind may be divided into 3 divisions, namely, the senses, the intellect and the will. I don't intend to say anything on the first two divitions. The most prominent characteristic of our mind is the will and it is upon this alone that I wish to say a few words to night. We are endowed with various springs of action and observe a scale of relative worth in them. When these intuitive impulses turn up within us one after another and are compared, we instivctively know the better from the worse. The consciousness we have of the relative excellence of the several instincts

and affections which compete for our will is called conscience. This moral faculty not only enables us to distinguish right from wrong, but makes us feel that we ought to do what is shown to be right and that we ought to avoid what is shown to be wrong. In any given state of things we know what is right and what is wrong and we feel that we are bound to act up to what is shown to be right. This is a law of our mind which is invariable and infallible in its operation ; but we feel no compulsion to do what we ought to do. The liberty is given to us to choose between the two. This power in us to choose between two conflicting springs of action and to put forth our energy as we choose to do is called will and it is in the right use of this faculty that our dignity and privelege as moral beings consist. I may however state in this connection that a question is often asked as to whether conscience is really an infallible guide. Instances are brought forward to show that what was once believed to be right was given up as wrong at another time. This question as to the real nature of conscience arises from a misapprehension of its function. Its dictate bears no doubt an absolute look ; but, as already stated, it is only a judgment as regards the relative worth of two conflicting springs of action. When conscience says " This is right," it only means that it is better than that. When one person decides as between two springs of action say A and B, that A is better than B and therefore says that A is right and anther person decides as between A and C, that A is worse than C and therefore says that A is wrong, there is really no conflict or discrepancy between the two judgments, though in the one case A was said to be right and in the other case A was said to be wrong. Suppose you see a blind man who is unable to find his way, it is clearly your duty to assist him. Your conscience says that, in preference to your love of rest or to your other duties which you can postpone, you are bound to assist the blind man. Suppose when you do so, a boy has fallen from a tree and fractured

his leg, it now becomes your clear duty in preference to assisting the blind man who must now be left to wait and find out some other assistance, to take the boy to the hospital and to do all you can to get the fractured limb set right. If you neglect this and still continue to assist the blind man, you will be doing a a thing which as compared with your love of rest, was right and which, as compared with the feeling of compassion for the boy, has become wrong. It is needless to pursue further this question. A full exposition of this subject will take a consideably long time. It is sufficient to say that discrepancies in ethical judgments are likely to be of this nature and when closely examined, will disappear. Conscience, I may say, is an infallible guide and its judgment as between two springs of action which compete for our will at a given time never goes wrong. Gentlemen it is thus calear that we are governed by moral laws. A provision is made within us to know what is right and what is wrong. We are never left in darkness as to what our duty is in any given circumstances. Simultaneously with this perception of what is right there is a demand made upon us that we ought to do what is right. There is no denying or getting over this imperative demand. This imperative demand clearly brings us face to face with God who is the author of this demand and with whom we hold moral relations We are neverthless left free to act as we choose. These are the grand and majestic laws by which we are governed and trained. This liberty to choose often involves us in ruin. We very often cboose the wrong and bring terrible consequences upon ourselves and others. The ruinous consequences to the individuals and to the world at large caused by deviation from the path of duty are so immense and terrifying that some seriously ask with some show of reason as to whether this world is governed by any God at all and whether, if there is a God, He could not have averted all these consequences by creating man so as to be incapable of doing what is

wrong. To answer this question fully would necessitate a separate essay. I must therefore be content by saying that the following words of Dr. Martineau seem to me to furnish the clue. "Such investiture with selective power introduces at once relations of trust, of living affection, of possible sympathy and of possible alienation. The Divine proposer of the choice makes no secret of his our preference; but in order that in becoming ours as well, it may constitute a true spiritual tie uniting us with him. He refrains from imposing it as inevitable and would have us make it our own by unconstrained assent." We thus see that God has left us free that a true spiritual tie may be constituted. For God, who makes those massive heavenly bodies move in strict obedience to fixed laws, it is not impossible to make us comform to certain rules, but if we were so made, we would only be mere machines. We would not then be able to go out of the path shown to us but our dignity would be lost. The moral and physical suffering consequent upon the freedom of our will is very little as compared with the high purpose in view. Happiness, success and prosperity in this world are not the aims of our life. The formation of our character is the end in view. We should be thankful to God that He has not made us a set of images to follow blindly where we are led to but that he has made us free and placed us in positions of trust and responsibility. Every one of us however low he may be in the eye of the world occupies a position of trust and respousibility. A domestic servent has it in his power to rise to the highest position possible in God's kingdom. If he should but do his daily work faithfully and cheerfully to the best of his power without any regard to his wages but out of love for his master, he would add to the wealth of his inner nature. The nature of the work given to us does not determine the standard of excellence. Whatever situations of life we may be placed in, if we do our work honestly and faithfully to the best of our

power and with a loving heart, therein lies the excellence. Faithfully therefore to the laws given for our guidance we are bound to improve ourselves; and if we will be faithful to the light given us, we are sure to march steadily onward in the path of progress. The law of progress indicate herein is expressed by Shakespeare in the following words of Hamlet.

Refrain to-night
And that shall lend a kind of easiness.
To the next abstinence; (the next more easy.
For use almost can change the stamp of nature
And either curb the devil or throw him out
With wondrous potency.)

Dr Martineau gives expression to the same law of progress in the following beautiful lives. "Whoever is faithful to a first glance that opens on him shall have a second in advance of it; and if still he follows the messenger of God, angels ever brighter shall go before his way. Every duty done leaves the eye more clear and enables gentler whispers to reach the ear; every brave sacrifice incurred lightens the weight of the clinging self which holds us back; every storm of passion swept away leaves the air of the mind transparent for more distant visions; and thus by a happy concord of spiritual attractions the helping grace of Heaven descend and meet the soul intent to rise." Gentlemen I have done. The moral laws given for our guidance are great, majestic, solemn and holy and as intelligent and moral beings, we are bound to be faithful to them.

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The Supernatural in the Natural.

MAN has a natural and innate craving for the Supernatural. His thirst for a knowledge of the spiritual and the unseen is unquenchable. To the primitive man, "the visible scene around seems to be alive; day and night have in them, the lights and shades of thought; summer and winter appear to be pulsations of a hidden joy and grief; the eager stream appears to be charged with some hasting errand and the soft wind appears to whisper secrets to the forest leaves." As he gains experience and advances in knowledge and intelligence, these primitive ideas disappear to some extent; but the wonders of nature do not cease to hold him under their sway. They continue to strike him with awe and reverence. Stupendous heavenly bodies and the forces of nature continue to rivet his attention and to present the incomprehensible to him. He finds himself unable to explain them except by referring them to spiritual agents. He therefore finds a God in the sun (Sun God-சூரிய பகவான்) a God in the moon (Moon God-சந்திர பகவான்), a God in the fire (Fire God-அக்கினி பகவான்), a God in the phenomena connected with rain (a God of thunder or-வருண பகவான்) a God in the wind (வாயு பகவான் or God of wind) and so on. His conceptions of special divinities in the natural objects and forces of nature multiply and increase; and rivers, mountains, forests and other places become peopled with nymphs, elves etc. Some of these gods and spirits are regarded as kind and benevolent and others are regarded as mischievous, malevolent and dangerous. These polytheistic conceptions hold man under their grip for a

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very long time. It is only when he attains a high degree of intelligence and sees things with an unclouded eye and without prepossessed opinions and ideas, that he finds unity in nature and finds the rational solution of the universe in the one and the only one almighty, all good and all wise God, ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind. Man is thus found to be a spiritual and religious being impelled by the very constitution of his nature to find the supernatural in the natural. His innate and natural tendency is to be satisfied only with a spiritual interpretation of the Universe. The outward forms in which his craving may manifest itself at one time may undergo change and may even be given up altogether at another time. They may and do vary from time to time; but the craving itself is there always and even increases in intensity as he advances in intelligence and as his several faculties are developed. Notwithstanding all this, we find that his ideas on the subject are not always clear and well defined. The generality of the people do not think for themselves. They take their opinions from their ancestors and their surroundings and these in turn from theirs and so on, till we will find that the opinions held by a large number of people can be traced to a single or a few individuals, who were able to think for themselves and to influence others and to gain some followers. Even when these few think for themselves, they are so much fettered by the tyranny of their preconceived ideas and by the age in which they live, that they very rarely find out the correct solutions of all the problems which may engage their attention. It is thus that opinions and doctrines in direct conflict with one another have come to be held by large classes of people, each class being numerically very strong. In addition to the apathy, indolence and want of moral courage which lead so many to borrow their opinions and prevent them from having their own, there is another factor which helps to bring about the same result. The book

of nature which God has given us to read fails by our very familiarity with it, to influence us to its fullest extent, unless we read it with devoted attention and singleness of purpose to find out the truth and the truth alone. The glorious sun rises every day and runs its course with its fascinating golden rays in the morning, its noonday splendour and its gleams of burning red in the evening. It gives us light and heat and is the source and ruler of our lives. In the words of Sir John Lubbock. "It draws up water from the ocean and pours it down in rain to fill the rivers and refresh the plants; it raises the winds which purify the air and waft our ships over the seas; it draws our carriages and drives our steam engines, for coal is but the heat of former ages stored up for our use; animals live and move by the sun's warmth; it inspires the song of birds, paints the flowers and ripens the fruit. Through it, the trees grow. For the beauties of nature, for our food and drink, for our clothing, for our light and life, for the very possibility of our existence, we are indebted to the sun." The moon which may justly be called the "Empress of night," and which is so refreshingly beautiful that one finds delight in roaming at ease in an open plain alone or with friends bathed in its cool and silvery rays, is ever revolving round our earth; and in so doing presents its many phases which add so much to her beauty and interest. Her attraction combined with that of the sun causes the tides, which are so essentially serviceable to navigation. The starry heavens in a moonless and cloudless night with countless stars shining, up above the world so high like diamonds in the sky present such a glorious, grand and sublime spectacle, that it is impossible to form a true and adequate conception of the same. Neither the imagination of man nor the genius of poets can be said to have risen equal to this. This world itself in which we live with its mountains and hills, its valleys and forests, its rivers and lakes and seas, its animals and

plants and its atmospheric clothing is a fairy land of exquisite beauty, and the beneficient design to make it an enjoyable habitation for us is manifest every where. The mountains introduce us to their lofty and mysterious summits and to their deep valleys which are covered with leafy veils pierced through by stately trees. We are invited there to sit or roam about in a carpet of flowers and grasses; and to enjoy the fresh and invigorating air filled with a delicious perfume. The music of the rushing streams, the sight of beautiful landscapes, the exhilarating sunshine on the rich foliage and the grandeur of the storms, the blue haze of the distance, the morning tints and the evening glow-all these make the mountain scenery a source of delight and instruction which we can have nowhere else. In the words of Ruskin, "Mountains seem to have been built for the human race, as at once, their schools and cathedrals, full of treasures of illuminated manuscripts for the scholar, kindly in simple lessons for the worker, quiet in pale cloisters for the thinker, glorious in holiness for the worshipper. They are great cathedrals of the earth, with their gates of rock, pavements of clouds, choirs of streams and stones, altars of snow and vaults of purple traversed by the continual stars." We go to the mountains jaded and dispirited and we return healthy, strong, energetic and lively. In forest scenery, we have great and gigantic trees towering up with their crowns out of sight amongst a canopy of foliage. The delightful shade, the fragrant flowers and the music of birds captivate the mind and is likely to make one poetical. What shall we say of water, the collection of which is called by different names such as, rivers, lakes and seas etc. In the words of Ruskin "Water is the most wonderful" "If one think of it as the source af all the changefulness and beauty which we have seen in the clouds; then as the instrument by which the earth we have contemplated was modelled into symmetry and its crags chiselled

into grace; then as in the form of snow, it robes the mountains it has made with that transcendent light which we could not have conceived, if we had not seen; then as it exists in the form of torrents, in the iris which spans it, in the morning mist which rises from it, in the deep crystalline pools which mirror its hanging shore, in the broad lake and glancing river, finally in that which is to all human minds, the best emblem of unwearied, unconquerable power; the wild various, fantastic, tameless unity of the sea, what shall we compare to this mighty this universal element for glory and for beauty or how shall we follow its eternal cheerfulness of feeling. It is like trying to paint a soul" In the animal and vegetable world, we have an indefinite variety of beautiful and useful objects. The symmetry of form, the vartiety of structure and the lavish abundance with which these animals and vegetables clothe and enliven the earth are looked upon with admiration by all who have eyes to see, ears to hear and minds to think. We thus see how very grand, sublime, majestic, beautiful and useful nature is. Time and space are infinite and all this infinite space of which we can form no conception are bespangled and adorned with stars, planets and other heavenly bodies, and all these heavenly bodies perform their functions in the sky without any physical support. In the words of Sir John Lubbuck. "We have given to us the boundless extent of the earth, we have a mansion covered with roof which glitters in one fashion by day and in another by night." The air we breathe and without which we can not live for one moment, the water which we drink and which is so necessary to sustain life, the light by which we perform the functions of our life-all these and so many other things are provided for us. These ought to satisfy any one who goes to nature to read its volumes with the sole aim of knowing what it teaches, that there is the supernatural in the natural and that there is a mind behind, which controls, directs and rules the natural. To the

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unthinking and the indifferent however, these do not signify much. If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, they would believe and adore and preserve for many generations, the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown. Familiarity with nature makes them tired and prevents them from seeing the inner meaning. The craving for the spiritual however remains. It is interwoven in their very conceptions. They cannot get out of this. Their conceptions however, of the spiritual are vague and indefinite. The spiritual forces itself upon them but they are not inclined to possess the necessary frame of mind nor are they inclined to make the necessary sacrifice, to decipher the language of nature. In this state of things, they long to have some positive evidence, which will place the matter beyond doubt, without any efforts on their part. By positive evidence they mean, some occurrence out of the usual way, some deviation from the ordinary course of nature. It is thus that the hallowed memories of sacred names become associated with miraculous occurrences. A boy cut into pieces and cooked up as food for சிருத்தொண்டர் has his body made whole, is restored to life and answers to the call of his mother, when she does so at the bidding of the sage. A large piece of stone tied to the body of Appar floats in the sea and helps him to get to the shore. In answer to the prayers of Karikal Ammai, two delicious mango fruits not grown in the ordinary way but heaven-sent are placed in her hands. When accosted by Manikavasagar a born deaf and dumb girl speaks and gives suitable answers in poetry to his questions on philosophical religious problems. The bony remains of a deceased grown up girl burned up to ashes, are sufficient for Gnanasambanther to grow up the girl again within a few minutes and to restore her to her father in all her beauty and loveliness, just as she was before she died. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mahamad and told him that he was appointed the Apostle of God. In the twelth year of his mission,

Mahamad made his night journey from Mecca to Jeruselem and thence to heaven and there conversed with God. The waters of the red sea divided to allow the Isralites to cross their bed. Moses came to the mount of God and the angel of Jehovah appeared unto him in a flame of fire. The bush burned with fire but was not consumed. Moses cast his rod upon the ground and it became a serpent.

Jesus was born in a supernatural manner. He healed the sick and the diseased. The deaf and dumb were given the powers of speech and hearing and they spoke when he commanded them to do so. The blind were able to see and the lame to walk at his bidding. He cast out demons. He stilled a storm with a word and walked upon the sea. He turned water into wine and when blessed by him, 5 loaves of bread multiplied so as to serve as food for five thousand people and more. He raised three persons from the dead and he himself rose from the grave after lying there for two nights. I believe that similar miracles are recorded in the Scriptures and other sacred writings containing biographical sketches of many other prophets and sages. Whether these miraculous occurrences actually took place or not, it will not be proper for me to discuss, espacially in this essay delivered as a member of this association which dose not encourage discussion on religius subjects. I may however, observe that to those who would not and could not otherwise be convinced of the spiritual and the unseen, these miraculous occurrence would not be sufficient to carry conviction. They could not prove to them the existence of God nor could they prove to them, his attributes. In order to render miraculous occurrences probable, the existence of a Power in or beyond nature by which these occurrences could be brought about must be assumed and the proof for the existence of that Power must be sought for elsewhere. This view of the value of miracles is expressed by Jesus him-

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self. When the Pharisees the Saducees came to him and desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven, he answered and said unto them "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign and there shall be no sign given unto it but the sign of Jonah." This is as much as to say that if they could not otherwise be convinced, no signs could convince them and therefore no sign would be given unto them; and that call to repentance was all they would have. It is therefore incumbent upon us to shake off our apathy, indolence and prejudice and to look at nature straight and to exercise our God-given faculties properly. If we do so, we will find abundant evidence of the supernatural in the natural. In fact, there will be no partition wall between the two. To know and to understand the one will be to know and to understand the other. The craving for the spiritual will be freely satisfied and our conceptions of the spritual will become clear and definite. We will then know our true worth and be able to realize our greatness as children of God. Let us then try to open the inexhaustible book of nature and try to read a page or two and see what it teaches. Let us in the first instance analyse our conceptions of matter. We think and speak as if we know well enough what matter is. We feel no doubt about this. We think that our knowledge in this respect is clear, certain and positive. We have the evidence of our senses for the outward world and the things that are in it. We see an object and seeing with us is believing. If we have any doubt that our eyes are deceiving us and we do not feel any doubt in this matter we can go to the object and touch it and the sense of touch will tell us that it is a real object. Our other senses also come to our help and we will be tempted to call one a fool who may say that our knowledge of the external world is delusive. A little consideration will however show that what we are really conscious

of are not the external objects but only our own sensations and ideas. What really happens is, as you know that, in the acts of perception, certain nerve thrills of different sorts are produced in our brains. When the nerves are affected in this way, certain sensrtion and ideas appear, how and why we do not know. We are only conscious of these ideas and sensations. When we say therefore that we know the external world, we should only mean that we are conscious not of any outward object but only of certin mental phenomena, of certain ideas within ourselves. The external world is only inferred as the basis or cause for the mental phenomena in us. What the external world is, what it is like, we know absolutely nothing. If one should choose to deny that there is any external world at all, we will not be in a position to disprove his statement. All we can say is that we must trust our natural faculties, that there is an irresistable conviction and belief in us that there is an external world and that we have therefore to believe it. You will thus see that, at the very outset, we find mystery in nature, we find the supernatural in the natural, that our very knowledge of matter which we consider to be the most positive of all our knowledge, turns out to be a knowledge of mental phenomena only, turns out to be a knowledge of the unseen and the mysterious. Let us now pay a little attention to the world in which we live. If we go to an uninhabited island which we never heard of, and if we see therein a building with several rooms, we conclude without any hesitation that it was designed and constructed by human beings like ourselves, though there is no other trace or evidence of any man having gone to that island before. We are conscious of intelligence in ourselves and we see intelligence displayed by human beings like ourselves. When we see therefore design, purpose and contrivance in any work, we naturally conclude that there was a designer who was the author thereof. This way

of interpretation is natural to us. We see in this world of ours evidences of fitness and contrivance. These are present wherever we turn our eye. Lung and air, sound and hearing, light and sight and male and female are, admirably corelated to each other and we observe similar designs and contrivances everywhere. We therefore naturally conclude that, in these natural things, there is the supernatural, that this world is the work of an Almighty intelligent being. It was supposed till about a century ago that this world as a whole was created a few thousand years ago. This theory of absolute creation appears however to give way before the researches of modern science. Bits of pottery are found under fifty feet of Nile mud. Flint axes, spear heads and bones of extinct animals are disintered from surprising depths. These and similar discoveries made by the naturalists, the geologists and physiologists appear to prove that this world was in the process of formation for an in finitely long period. According to this theory, we are informed that the solar system of which this world forms a part, was once an incandescent nebulous mass. This mass had a rotation and as it rotated, it flung off in successions its outer rings. These outer rings condensed in their orbits into the planetary spheres. Each in its turn solidified round its molten centre into a world, till the sun alone retains its self-luminous glow. This is how our solar system was formed. This world of ours which was red hot, put on a decent crust, got the water into its hollows; and the residuary atmosphere became cool and pure. It then became fit for vegetable life and began with lichens, mosses and ferns. These were gradually modified and new types grew and multiplied and in course of time animal life appeared on the scene and devolped into different species till man appeared at the summit; and the world has come to be what it is, full of vegetable and animal life, with the intelligent man crowning the whole. How does this

theory of formation by slow process extending over millions and millions of years drive out the supernatural, the intelligent mind from the universe? How does it differ from the theory of abosolute creation so far as the intelligent mind and the creative intellect is concerned? Do you conceive it possible that this beautiful and sublime result could have been achieved by a mass of senseless atoms without a designing and controlling mind? The essence of the difference between the old and the new theories lies in this. The causality which the former concentrated, the latter distributes. The fiat of a moment has spread itself along the path of perpetuity. The sum total of the work is the same. There has been a perennial flow of thought of all along. There has been a gradual growth. There has been gradual ascent from ruder elements to more refined combinations. Growth cannot dispense with causation. You cannot out of tiniest cellules hatch any universe actual or possible. Adequate cause is necessary. We will have to draw upon the fund of infinite resource to just the same extent whether you call for it all at a stroke, or call for it little by little gradually during an infinitely long period. You cannot produce this beautiful and grand universe from something which is next to zero, though you spread an eternity between. In the words of a unitarian writer on the subject, " Unless nature be endowed with intelligence, there is no reason that we know, why it might not have remained a perpetual chaos, a chronic anarchy of discordant elements, incapable of stable organization. Certainly the original arrangement and constitution of matter might have had any one of a million various positions and properties; and each in the process of evolution, would have given a different result. To choose out of the infinite variety of possible primitive arrangements with their corresponding various results, just that one first arrangement and particular rudimental structure that, in gradual necessary unfolding, would

work out just the present admirable result, is a thing requiring forethinking wisdom, far more than an instantaneous creation." You will thus see that, in the natural, there is a forethinking wisdom and creative intellect indicated and manifested, which has brought about the present admirable result. When you find bits of pottery under fifty feet of Nile mud, you conclude without any hesitation that these were caused by intelligent beings at a remote past, and you discredit the theory of absolute creation a few thousand years ago. When we find in the universe, a marvellous exhibition of the adaptation of means to ends and when the cosmos discloses itself as a wonderful order, is it not plain to us that this cosmos is the work of an almighty and all intelligent creative mind. You thus see that there is the supernatural in the natural and that the unseen and supernatural mind, the creative intellect is manifested plainly in nature. From this conception of the universe as a whole, let us descend to some particulars. Let us see how the solar system is supported in the sky. This has been a standing wonder in all ages. Our unscientific ancestors were unable to conceive how the earth could stand in the sky unsupported by any phisical body. They therefore fancied that the earth rested on the head of great serpent, the serpent rested on an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise. They did not pursue the question further. Either there must be nothing to support the tortoise or there must be an infinite number of supports lying under one another. The question was perplexing and insoluble and the matter was left unsettled. We know however that the sun and the planets revolving round it move in the heavens unsupported by any physical object. The sun is a stupendous fiery mass one million three hundred and five thousand times larger than our earth and contains three hundred thirty-two thousand times as much matter as our earth. It is the centre of our solar system. Round this stupendous body revolve the

planets (1) Mercury. (2) Venus. (3) The Earth. (4) Mars. (5) Jupiter. (6) Saturn. (7) Uranus. (8) Neptune. Mercury the nearest planet to the sun rotates on its axis in 24 hours 5 minutes and 30 seconds and revolves round the sun in 88 days. Our earth rotates on its axis in 24 hours and moves round the sun in one year. Jupiter revolves round the sun in 11. 8 years and Neptune the remotest planet revolves round the sun in 164. 6 years. Mercury the nearest planet to the sun is situated at a distance of 36 millions of miles from it, the earth 92 millions of miles and Neptune the remotest planet at a distance of 2792 millions of miles from it. The velocity with which these planets move is simply inconceivable, Take for instance our earth. It completes a journey of 583 millions of miles in its orbit round the sun in one year. Besides the motion in its orbit, it has a diurnal motion round itself, which is about one thousand miles an hour at the equator. Taking these two motions together, the earth has a speed of 1,000 miles a minute. You thus see that the sun and all its planets remain in the heavens unsupported by any physical objects and that the planets revolve round themselves and round the sun with inconceivable velocities, and that they complete their journeys at the appointed times without any deviation whatsoever and keeping up their times even to the minutest fraction of a second. How wonderfully are they kept in their places? Do you not see the supernatural in these natural phenomena? Can anything but an almighty intellegent mind keep them in their places and regulate their motions so very exactly in accordance with fixed laws? We can well exclaim with our poet Thayumanaver "அண்டகோடிகள் அந்தரத்தில் தாழாமல் நிலைநிற்கவில்லையா?", which means "Do not crores of heavenly bodies stand unsupported in the sky without swerving from their appointed places? A devout mind like Thayumanaver's cannot but see the divine hand in the keeping of these bodies in the sky without any physical support whatsoever. If a prophet

should rise to-day and let fly in the air two and only two limes and could arrange to make them move round each other for some time, you will declare that he is possessed of divine powers. We see here not two limes. We have here numerous stupendous bodies revolving round with inconceivable velocities and keeping punctually their time and all standing without any physical support. Nothing can be more wonderful than this. The divine hand, the unseen mind and the regulating intellect are clearly seen in the upkeep of these heavenly bodies. It may be said that these are kept in their places by the force of gravity and other forces. Do you really comparehend what force of gravity is ? Sir Isac Newton may find the explanation of an aple falling to the ground from the branch of tree, in the force of gravity. But why should the earth attract the apple ? Why should not the apple fly upwards or sideways ? Force of gravity is defined to be a simple attractive force between any two or all the particles or masses at every sensible distance, with a strength varying inversely as the square of the distance. What is this force? Whence does it derive its origin ? And why does it so act? No body can explain. It involves the gratest inconceivabilities. It must be a force inherent in matter and if so cannot act in empty space where matter is not. It however acts through vacuous space and its velocity is inconceivably instantaneous. It not only acts where there is no intervening medium, but what is most perplexing, it acts in perfect indefference to all intervening obstacles. All media appear to be perfectly transparent to the force of gravity and two points on opposite sides of the globe attract each other as if there was absolutely nothing between them. Tho Sun and Neptune which are at a distance of 2,792 millions of miles from each other, act and react upen each other instantaneously and perfectly indifferent to the intervening obstacles. The matter does not rest here. The sun and all its planets act and react upon one another in the same way. Are you really able to conceive

what this wonderful force can be? There are other inconceivabilities in connection with this force. The current idea appears to be that a single isolated particle would have no gravitative force. The moment another particle is placed in relation to it, gravitative force springs up in both the particles. When three are placed, all these three act and react upon one another and so on, so that if millions of particles be placed in the same way, the single particles which when placed alone appeared to have no force, acts upon all those millions of particles with a force varying inversely with the square of the distance. How so much force was created in this single particle and how does it act in vacuous spaces where matter is not and how does it act regardless of the intervening mediums as if they were not, passes our comprehension. There must be truly something supernatural in this that is called natural. Let us now take an instance or two in the material things that we see in this earth and see what they teach. It was stated before that coal is but the heat of former ages stored up for our use. Let us now see how this coal has been stored up. You know that coal is a black mineral extensively used throughout the civilized world for heating and illumination and for the carrying on of manufactures and industries and it is well known that England owes her prosperity and her preeminence in commerce to her possession of wide and valuable coal fields. By the use of coal we are enabled to travel from one end of a country to the other in an inconceivably small space of time, and it is by the use of coal that our vessels cross the wide ocean with great rapidity. The enormous developement of iron trade has become possible owing to the power obtained from the consumption of coal. You know that coal consists chiefly of carbon and contains 83 to 93 per. cent. Diamond which is so beautiful and is so highly valued by us is nothing but carbon in a very pure form. The advantages we derive from coal are so great that coal is rightly called the "black diamond". This

very useful mineral is composed of vegetable matter. A layer of coal found at some depth from the surface of the earth is called a coal seam. In the place where a coal seam is found, there must have been an extensive forest and luxuriant vegetable growth. The remains of these trees and plants fell to the ground and soon turned into a black, pasty, vegetable mass, the layer thus formed being increased from year to year by the continual *accumalation* of fresh carbonacious matter. This was in course of time, subjected to an ever increasing pressure of accumilating strata, compressing the sheddings and remains of a whole forest into a thickness in some cases of a few inches of coal. It is thus that a coal seam was formed in the laboratory of nature. A coal field is a place where there are several coal seams one above another with intervening strata of sandstones and shales. It is said that in the Lancashire coal field, there are eighteen seams of coal and in that of Westfalia, there are about 117 coal seams. The site of a coal seam must have been a dry land covered with extensive forests. Vegetables decayed and the forest went to ruins. This was then submerged by the sea or a lake and a stratum of sandstones and shales was formed. The sea or lake then receded and the place became dry land again and an extensive forest grew again and supplied materials for another coal seam, then submerged again by the sea or a lake and so on. The site of a coal field must have been a dry land covered with extensive forests and under the sea or a lake, alternately as many times as there are coal seams. There are many coal fields extending over many square miles each containing many layers, in Scotland, England, Germany, Russia and several other places in Europe; and there are many such in America, as compared with which those of great Britain appear to be small, and in several other places in the world. Now Gentlemen, if all our present forests in the world were uprooted and overthrown for forming a coal seam, the amount of coal which would thereby be formed for some future

use in a coal field would amount to a thickness of only two or three inches at most and yet we find that in the coal field of Westphalia alone if all the seams in that field be placed one above another the amount of coal would amount to no less than 294 feet. Conceive Gentlemen, that in the process of preparing this world for our habitation, so much fuel has been stored up for our use and in order to store it thus, the same place has had to be dry land and sea alternately so many as more than 100 times in a place as in the case of Westphalia coal field. Do you not see the supernatural in these natural events? Has there not been a preconception of an end in view and an adequate contrivance to bring about the same. If one should choose to shut his eyes and to be blind to what is clearly shown, we cannot quarrel with him. But the facts stare upon us and show divinity in nature. Having spoken of diamond in this connection, I wish to say a word more about it. It is needless to say that diamond is the hardest of all known substances and is a very beautiful object and is very highly valued by us. Yet it is nothing but carbon crystalised in nearly a pure state. It can very easily be resolved into its component parts. If we heat it to a red heat and then plunge it into a jar of oxygen gas, it immediately expands and changes into a coky mass and burns away. From the most valuable of all our precious stones, it reduces itself into a *poisoness* gas which we and all animals exhale. This shows how, out of the crudest materials which we consider as poisoness gas and hurtful to our health, the most precious of all the precious stones has been manufactured in the laboratory of nature for our use. Does not this indicate a contriving intelligence in what is called the process of nature? We found that coal was composed of vegetable matter. How does a plant itself spring forth and grow? You throw a seed in the ground. It takes from its environments just the materials it wants, and it takes them just in the proportions it requires. It sprouts forth into a tender plant and grows, all along taking and

absorbing the necessary materials to just the extent and in the proportions it requires from the ground underneath and from the surrounding atmosphere etc. We who are endowed with intelligence do not take our food so exactly as the plants. We very often make mistakes. We sometimes starve and sometimes overload ourselves and very often take the wrong things, thereby subjecting ourselves to many ailments. Have these plants intelligence? It is said that they are organised bodies without intelligence, sensation and voluntry motion. It may be so. But do you not see intelligence working behind and guiding its growth according to fixed laws. Surely there is the supernatural in what is called the natural process of a plant life. Coming to the animal kingdom, we find in a still more striking way, the supernatural in the natural. In the words of Dr. Martineau, animals impelled by their instincts "select the means without preconception of the end. The moth which deposits its eggs on the only plant which will feed the future *caterpilliar*, the Salmon which punctually ascends the stream and entrusts progeny to the fresh waters in which itself was born, the bird that builds and hides its nest on the ground or under the eaves or pendent from the bough and seems to get ready for its dangers and time; the mother ostriches that club together to put all their eggs of yesterday into one net under the charge of a male bird and all those of tomorrow into another; the new fledged catcher which at once snaps without missing at its prey with true measure of the distance and selection of the kind; the constructive beaver, the civic ant, the co-operative bee-all are engaged in building up a balanced organism of relations. a beneficient interdependence, every part of which, even that which they distinctly serve is wholly beyond their cognizance." Though the ends are unknown to the creatures themselves, are they absent altogether, are they nonexistent? No, it cannot be. They must be assembled elsewhere. There is clearly the supernatural Divine mind

working out these ends through the pressure of countless feelings of the creattures, which it disposes of to bring about its own preconceived ends. It is needless to multiply instances. We found that the external world itself, of whose existence we do not feel the slightest doubt, is only inferred by us as the necessary cause for our ideas and sensations. Its existence cannot be proved beyond doubt. When we examine matter even as we think we know it, a little more closely, we find that there are no plurality of substances. One of the great characteristics of modern science is its doctrine of the correlation and conservation of forces. A lightning flash is found to be of the same nature as an electric discharge. The electric discharge is found to be a case of molecular motion ; heat, light sound, have all likewise been found to be modes of motion capable of conversion one to the other. When we go one to the other. When we go one step further, we find that all motion has its source in some one single force. We thus come down finally to force as the ultimate. What then is this ultimate force? Need we doubt that this ultimate force must be a spiritual force. We have certain primary convultions. These primary convictions cannot be proved. We nevertheless, strongly believe in the enduring verity of those things which are revealed to us by these primary convictions. This we do only by faith which is trust in our own highest and purest self. We must believe in the veracity of our faculties, and we cannot leap or go beyond them. They are the only means given to us for acquiring knowledge. One of these primary convictions is our belief as regards causality. We cannot help believing that every event, occurrence or happing has a cause. But what do we mean by a cause. Some philosophers define cause as the invariable antecedent. This definition however, does not satisfy us. We believe that there is something more in the cause than its being an invariable antecedent. We believe that cause is something which is able to produce the consequent, a force

from which the consequent must follow. The only knowledge we have of an efficient cause, of a force which is able to produce and which produces the consequent is our own will power. One body resists another. There is action and reaction; Do you not believe that the force that acts and the force that reacts are of the same nature and quality? Two persons wrestle with each other. One pushes and tries to throw down the other. The other resists and tries in his turn to throw down the former. There is action and reaction. The power put forth by one is resisted by the power put forth by the other. What is the power which is put forth herein? Do we not know that it is will power? At the fountain head of the energy which one puts forth is his will. Is not this will power resisted by the will power of the other? Now, inatead of one's will power being resisted by the will power of another as in the cause of wrestling, if it is resisted by a material object as when one presses a table with his hand and tries to throw it down or to break it, do you not see that the power which resists him must be of the same kind as his i. e. that power must also be a will power? It is thus clear that the ultimate force of what we call matter or the external world must be the will power of some being possessed of intelligence. It is this being we call God. It thus appears that in the natural we find the supornatural, that God is revealed in nature, that God as revealed to us in nature possesses the attributes of intelligence and infinite power. We find also that, if we look to our own nature, the divine and the supernatural is clearly revealed. We possess moral sense. The moral sense declares that certain kinds of conduct or more worthly or more unworthly than others. This sense discerns a distinction of transcendent importance in our springs of action. The distinction is made by the words "right and wrong". The moral sense not only gives us a knowledge of right and wrong but it also imposes upon us an obligation to do what we feel to be right and to avoid doing what

we feel to be wrong. You know that wherever authority is felt, a relation between two members is indicated. Submission demanded from one implies a rule imposed by another. Our sense of perception introduce us to a world external to ourselves. In the same way our moral sense introduces us to a Being higher than ourselves who imposes the rule and demands submission from us. The attributes of God as apprehended by our conscience are righteousness and benevolence etc. We thus find the supernatural in the natural. The external world as well as our internal nature discloses to us the supernatural Being who is our God and father with his attributes of power, intelligence, wisdom righteousness and benevolence etc. Why should we therefore go about seeking for miracles or signs as proofs of God's existence or His nearness to us? He is in us and we live move and have our being in Him, Unless we have the eye to see, no miracles will make Him manifest us. True enlightenment is that which tells a man that miracles surround him every hour and every moment. To a barren, prejudiced and diseased heart, any number of miracles happening before the eye could not bring faith. To the spirit that has learned to see and to love, no miracles could surpass in significance that which constitute nature's hourly programme. Let us therefore look at nature with an eye of faith. Let us bow down loyally and with reverence, to the almighty, all holy, and all loving Being, who is revealed to us in nature, and in humanity, and let us prove ourselves worthy of the high privileges given to us by our Heavenly Father. Let us realize that we are made in His image and that we are His children and let us by faithfully carrying out His will in all the concerns of life and by a harmonious *developement* of all our faculties, make ourselves fit to be subjects and children in the everlasting kingdom, where sitting at the feet of our tender and affectionate Father we will be privileged to make eternal progress and to enjoy everlasting happiness.